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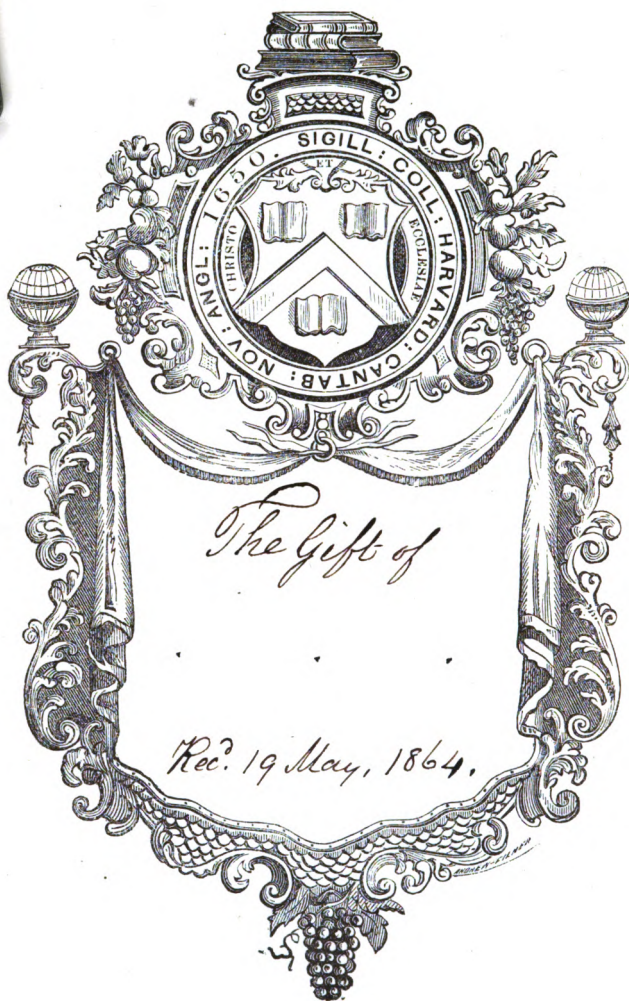
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## P R E F A C E .

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THE present volume, which constitutes the second of the Commentaries on the four Gospels and the Acts, has been prepared and issued at as early a date as possible, in view of the daily official labors of the author. The commentary on John is in an advanced state of preparation, and will be published at no very distant period. The same general plan and style of annotation, which characterizes my commentary on Matthew and Mark, has been observed in the preparation of the present volume; and I hope that no evidence will be furnished to the reader, that I have passed over or evaded any difficulties either of an exegetical or practical nature, which need and with our limited powers are susceptible of explanation. I have sought also, as in the preceding volume, to avoid all technicalities, and abstruse terms, and to render the commentary easy of comprehension to the most plain and unlettered mind. At the same time, I would fain hope, that this element of plainness and perspicuity has not been secured at the sacrifice of thoroughness of exposition, and a full and free use of the canons of exegesis and laws of interpretation accepted by all scholars in every country.

It was my original design to have comprised the commentary on Luke and John in one volume. As I advanced, however, in the preparation of the notes, I became convinced that in thus doing, I should be obliged either to make a book of unwieldy and ungainly size, or so restrict my comments especially on John, as to make them little else than mere *scholia*, or results of philological reasoning, without reference to the manner in which these results were reached, or to the removal of difficulties and reply to objections, which are so often necessary to a full and enlightened view of a given passage. Through



the liberal courtesy of my publishers, I therefore determined to issue these two gospels in separate volumes. This has enabled me to enlarge my commentary on Luke, and give more fulness to the notes on the parables and such other portions of his gospel as are peculiar to him.

Through an inadvertence which I can hardly account for, the word *Saviour* in my first volume was printed *Savior*. The orthography of the word is corrected in this volume.

The favor with which my commentary on Matthew and Mark has been received by ministers, editors, and private Christians of the various evangelical denominations, has given me great encouragement in the prosecution of my task. My hope is that the volume now offered to the Christian public, may be deserving of a like commendation. As has been before remarked, I have endeavored honestly to meet and explain to my best ability every passage; and if I have failed, as I would not be so presumptive as to suppose I have not, in giving in every instance the mind of the Spirit, I would crave that indulgence, which is awarded to such as furnish evidence of having striven to the best of their ability to unfold the true meaning of the inspired Word of God.

With these remarks, I commit this volume to my friends and the public, with the hope that it will furnish some assistance to the right understanding of the gospel of "the beloved physician," and render the reading of the same delightful and profitable.

JOHN J. OWEN.

NEW YORK, April 2, 1859.

## PREFACE TO THE GOSPEL OF LUKE.

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THE Evangelist Luke is generally conceded to have been a native of Antioch in Syria, and to have been either a Jew by birth or by religion. It is the more probable supposition, that he was born a Pagan, and that he early became a Jewish proselyte, from which he was subsequently converted to Christianity. Prof. Stuart inclines to the belief, that he was of Jewish extraction, from his being a companion of Paul in many places, and particularly when he made his last visit at Jerusalem, previously to his being sent to Rome to be tried before Cesar. That Luke was Paul's companion in this most dangerous and critical period of his ministry, is quite evident from the fact that his narrative in this portion of the Acts, takes the form of the first person plural. But this is no proof that he was a Jew by birth; and a reference to Col. 4: 11, 14 would seem to place it beyond a question, that he did not belong to those who were of the circumcision. That he was of Gentile extraction seems clear also from his name *Lucas*, a shortened form for *Lucanus*, a name derived from the adjective *Lucanian*, of or belonging to the Lucani, an Italian people of Lower Italy.

The scope and structure of Luke's gospel, free on the one hand from those restricted local references, which mark Matthew's gospel as one particularly designed for the Jews, and on the other, from the special regard for Gentile readers, which characterize both Mark and John's gospel—this predominant feature of *universality*, as Alford well styles it, which characterizes his gospel—show very conclusively that if a Jew, he was as untrammelled by Jewish prejudices and local attachments to the land of his fathers, as was the great apostle to the Gentiles himself.

If he was a Gentile convert, it throws much light on his Preface to the gospel. It shows that he had experienced in his own case, the want of just such a free and untrammelled gospel, as he was preparing for his brethren the Gentile and Jewish converts, who resided at a distance from the scene of the events related in the life of Jesus.

The argument drawn from Rom. 16 : 20, that he was the Lucius there mentioned, and if so, a Jew and related to the apostle, is hardly worth confutation. Lucius and Lucas are entirely different names, having not even an etymological affinity, the former being a Roman *prænomen* or first name, the latter, a *cognomen* or surname.

Tradition makes Luke to have been one of the Seventy sent forth by our Lord (Luke 10 : 1), but this rests on too slender authority, and seems to be contradicted by what he says in his Preface, that he compiled his gospel from what had been delivered unto him from eyewitnesses and ministers of the word ; the implication of which is, that he was not of the number of those who had personal knowledge of the facts of the gospel which he had compiled and given to the world. The tradition that Luke belonged to the Seventy, may have arisen from the fact, that he alone reported the mission of that band of disciples. It is evident from Col. 4 : 14, that the worldly calling of Luke was that of a physician.

For a considerable period of time, this Evangelist was a companion of Paul, to whom he seems to have attached himself at Troas, during his second missionary tour (Acts 16 : 10). This he indicates by the employment of the first person plural in his narrative. From that place he accompanied Paul into Macedonia. He seems to have remained at Philippi (Acts 16 : 4), while the apostle performed his missionary tour through Greece (Acts 17 : 1—18 : 18), and Proconsular Asia (Acts 18 : 18—19 : 41). When Paul returned to Philippi, and was about to set sail for Troas (Acts 20 : 6), Luke again joined his company, as is shown by the resumption of the first person plural. From this time he seems to have shared his labors, privations and dangers, until the apostle, driven by the fierce and unremitted persecutions of his Jewish enemies, felt himself constrained to appeal to Cesar, and was therefore sent under guard to Rome. Thither also Luke accompanied him (Acts 27 : 1), and doubtless tarried with him some length of time, and probably composed there the book of the Acts. He must have left Rome, however, before Paul had a hearing at the imperial tribunal, or he would doubtless have informed us of that event and its issue. It appears from 2 Tim. 4 : 11, that Luke was with the apostle when he was brought before Nero the second time. He probably returned with him from Asia Minor, whither the apostle probably repaired after his liberation from Rome on his first citation.

Almost every thing pertaining to his history is from this point very obscure, and depends mainly on that most uncertain of all sources of information, traditionary accounts. In regard to these, we will refer only to the two which relate to his death ; the one of which and most to be relied upon makes him to have died a natural death ; the other tradition is that he suffered martyrdom.

As it regards the time and place where Luke's gospel was written, there is some diversity of opinion. The fact that it preceded the composition and publication of the Acts, which latter work must have been composed anterior to the time when Paul made his first answer to Nero, since that event, as has been remarked, would have been recorded, must place its publication somewhere between the time when Luke first joined the company of Paul (A. D. 50), and when they set sail for Rome (A. D. 60). In this space of time there are only two intervals, during which Luke may be supposed to have had leisure and opportunity to collect the materials of his gospel. One of these was while he remained at Philippi, a space of nearly seven years, until he again attached himself to the company of Paul on his return from Ephesus. The other interval of time was the two years, in which Paul was detained a prisoner at Cesarea (Acts 24 : 27). So rare an opportunity at this time would be furnished for gathering the materials of his gospel from eye-witnesses to the great facts of our Lord's ministry, that I cannot withhold my belief, that this was the time when the gospel of Luke was composed, and that Cesarea was probably the place where it was first published. I know that Alford and others are disposed to make Philippi the place of its compilation and publication; but they are obliged to adopt, in view of his preface to the gospel, the very improbable conjecture that during his long sojourn at Philippi, he sailed into Palestine and there collected the materials for his work. How much more natural to suppose it to have been composed in Cesarea, where Luke would have such ample opportunity and time to travel about in Palestine, and see and converse with those who were personally conversant with the facts to be narrated. There is a tradition that the gospel was published in Achaia, whither it had been transmitted from Cesarea about A. D. 59. Webster and Wilkinson incline to the belief that it was published at Corinth A. D. 58, the materials having been collected at Cesarea.

There can be hardly a doubt that Luke intended his gospel principally for Gentile readers, yet not so exclusively so, as Mark and John. Its dedication to Theophilus, a noble Gentile convert, who lived out of Palestine, and had not the means at his command of knowing the certainty of the things in which he had been instructed, is strong evidence of this. The genealogy of Christ traced back to Adam, and in the line of our Lord's real ancestry, shows that his gospel was not prepared, as was that of Matthew, exclusively or mainly for Hebrew Christians. Many acts and sayings of our Saviour having reference either directly or more remotely to the Gentiles, and which are passed over by Matthew, are carefully related by Luke.

Luke's gospel has much in it which is found recorded by no other Evangelist. The circumstances connected with the birth of Jesus



and that of his Forerunner, are given in the first and second chapters with great minuteness. Indeed almost all that we learn of the birth and childhood of Jesus is obtained from Luke. From 9:51 to 18:14, comprising the incidents and instructions of our Lord's final journey to Jerusalem, the whole narrative with a few trifling exceptions is peculiar to Luke. The parables of the lost sheep, the piece of silver, the prodigal son, the unjust steward, the rich man and Lazarus, the importunate widow, the Pharisee and publican, the fig-tree in the vineyard, the Good Samaritan, the creditor with two debtors, the visit to Zaccheus, the touching story of the walk to Emmaus, are recorded only by Luke and form a striking feature of his gospel.

The style in which this gospel is written bespeaks the man of education and accurate research. It was most unquestionably composed in Greek, and has fewer Hebraisms, and a freer range of Greek compounds and idiomatic forms of construction than the other gospels. Alford remarks: "The composition of the sentences is more studied and elaborate than in Matthew and Mark; the Evangelist appears more frequently in the narrative, delivering his own estimation of men and things;—e. g. 7:29, 30; 16:14; 19:11, and in other places;—he seems to love to recount instances of our Lord's tender compassion and mercy; and in the report of his parables, e. g. in chap. XV., is particularly simple in diction, and calculated to attract and retain the attention of his readers." Olshausen also remarks, that Luke gives not so much the discourses, as the observations and occasional sayings of our Lord, with the replies of those who were present. This is evinced in those chapters pertaining to his last journey from Perea to Jerusalem. In addition to this it may be remarked that Luke's gospel takes a wider range and a more complete survey of our Lord's life and ministry than any of the others, beginning as it does with the circumstances attending the conception and birth of his Forerunner, and bringing down the narrative to the return of the disciples to the city after their Lord had ascended from Mount Olivet. In the synoptic portions of his gospel he is, however, generally less full than Matthew or Mark; but even there his sketches are bold, striking, and graphic, so that the great features of the transactions recorded are brought out and impressed forcibly upon the mind of the reader.

On the whole, as I have remarked in my Preface to Matthew's gospel, the gospel of Luke may be regarded as supplementary to that of Matthew, and gives marked prominence to all those points which would be particularly instructive to a Gentile reader, living away from Palestine, and therefore being ignorant of many things which would be well known to those who dwelt in the country which was the honored scene of our Lord's earthly presence and ministry.

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

## CHAPTER I.

**FORASMUCH** as many have taken in hand to set forth

## CHAPTER I.

1-4. These verses contain the Preface to Luke's Gospel, addressed to Theophilus. Its brevity and somewhat artificial construction have invested it with some difficulties, which are not such, however, as to affect the general sense lying clearly discernible on the face of the passage. These difficulties and slight obscurities will be referred to in their proper place.

1. *Forasmuch* (or *since now*) introduces what follows, as the reason why Luke resolved to write his gospel. The statement of this is contained in vs. 1, 2. The conclusion to which he came in view of these considerations, is given in vs. 3, 4. *Many*. Reference is had to the authors of these narrations of the acts and sayings of Jesus, compiled with good intent, and doubtless containing much that was useful in the early days of the church, when oral communication was the main vehicle by which the facts of the gospel were spread abroad and perpetuated. The Gospels of Matthew and Mark could not have been here referred to by Luke, inasmuch as the former was written by one who was an eye-witness, and Mark drew his materials directly from Peter, if he did not write, as is quite probable, under his immediate supervision. It is also quite doubtful whether Luke had seen these gospels at the time when he composed his own. Equally certain is it, that what are denominated the Apocryphal Gospels cannot be intended, for they were the offspring of a later age; nor could such puerilities, as constitute the greater portion of these gospels, be classed with the narratives spoken of here by Luke in terms of high commendation.

in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

*Have taken in hand*, i. e. have undertaken. The failure of these persons in the execution of their task, is thought to be hinted at in this form of expression. But this is an unwarrantable inference. Nothing more is meant than the simple undertaking of the task, without reference to its failure or success. The whole scope of the preface, however, shows that in Luke's estimation these disjointed and fragmentary narratives did not supply the wants of the church, and especially of such persons as Theophilus, who, living at a distance from the scene of the events, would be more likely to be imposed upon by fallacious statements, or confused and perplexed by contradictions and inconsistencies, than others having better opportunities for arriving at the truth, by their intimacy with those who had themselves seen our Lord, or had become well acquainted with the facts of his history from persons who had enjoyed that privilege. *To set forth in order a declaration*; more literally, *to arrange or compose a history*. The verb implies an arrangement of facts from materials already prepared to one's hand. These materials were supplied from the accounts given by the apostles and others who had been with Jesus. Histories composed however in this way, were in danger of being fragmentary and confused, and such, it is intimated, were those referred to in this verse. For with these desultory and disconnected accounts is contrasted Luke's gospel, drawn up with a perfect understanding of all things from the very first, and written with an orderly arrangement of all the essential facts of our Lord's ministry. It is well remarked by Ols-

2 • Even as they delivered them unto us, which 'from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word;

α Ha. 2: 8; 1 Pa. 5: 1; 3 Pa. 1: 16; 1 John 1: 1.

hausen, that, "as this Preface must be viewed as introductory to Luke's whole work (the Acts of the apostles being regarded as a second part of the Gospel), the expression, *things fully believed among us*, applies to more than the period of our Lord's earthly sojourn, embracing also the progress of the church up to the time when Luke wrote."

*Which are most surely believed among us*; literally, *of the things fully established among us* (or *in our estimation*). The belief in these reported acts and sayings of Jesus, is represented as based on the surest evidence, and the implication is that such evidence is of the highest necessity from the otherwise incredible nature of our Lord's miracles. It is here positively asserted, that the great facts of Christ's life, as given in the compilations referred to, were fully believed by Luke and his fellow-Christians.

2. This verse is closely connected with the preceding, as denoting the ground of the confidence entertained by Luke and others in the narratives referred to. *Even*. A better translation would be *inasmuch as*, since the adverb introduces this clause, as furnishing a reason for the belief just spoken of. *Delivered orally and in writing*. The relative *which* does not refer to *us*, but to *they*, i. e. the apostles who were eye-witnesses to the great facts of the gospel, and others also who were actors in the establishment of the Christian Church, and many of whom had seen and conversed with our Lord. These were the vouchers to the truth of the things reported abroad and believed by the Christians of those days. *From the beginning*, i. e. from the very birth and childhood of Jesus. Some erroneously limit this to the commencement of Christ's public ministry. But the sense in which Luke employs the expression, may be gathered from the commence-

3 • It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first,

δ Ma. 1: 1; John 15: 27.  
ε Ac. 15: 19, 25, 28; 1 Co. 7: 40.

ment of his own gospel, with the birth and childhood of Jesus and John the Baptist. *Eye-witnesses*, however, can refer to the apostles and disciples of Jesus, only in relation to those events which took place in the time of our Lord's public ministry, the previous occurrences, especially those which related to the birth and childhood of Jesus and John, being known from Mary and others conversant with them. *Ministers of the word* (i. e. of the gospel), refers here to the apostles, and perhaps to the evangelists or apostolic assistants. See Acts 13: 5. Some take *word* here in the sense of the Eternal Word or Logos, but this specific and peculiar use of the term is confined to John's writings.

3. *It seemed good, &c.* The effect produced upon Luke's mind by these defective narratives is here given. He was incited thereby himself to write on this subject, having, as he claimed, peculiar qualifications and facilities for the task, from the perfect knowledge of all the things relating thereto, to which he had attained. *To me also*. "Luke by this classes himself with the 'many,' and shows that he intended no disparagement nor blame to them, and was going to construct his history from similar sources." Alford. *Having had perfect understanding*; literally, *have traced or followed along accurately*, so as to be fully acquainted with the subject. This verb is employed both of one who is personally acquainted with the things related, and one who has received accurate information of them from others. *From the very first*, i. e. from the very beginning or source. This is a different word from the one in v. 2, translated *from the beginning*, being more emphatic, and denoting in this respect a superiority in Luke's narrative over the one previously referred to. From its literal signification, *from*

to write unto thee 'in order,  
'most excellent Theophilus,

d Ac. 11: 4. e Ac. 1: 1. f John 20: 31.

above, it is referred by some critics to the divine inspiration of Luke's gospel. But such a use of the word here is inapposite, and overlooks the antithesis between this and the words, *from the beginning*, in v. 2. The word *all things*, refers to all things of importance, such as Luke deemed essential to his narrative. *Perfect* in our common version is an adjective, but in the original is an adverb, signifying *with strict exactness, accurately*. The word *in order*, refers to the arrangement of the facts of the history in a connected form, not so much chronologically, however, as in reference to the general plan or outline of the work. Luke, like the other evangelists, often disregards the order of time, and groups together his incidents from their general resemblance, or to produce a given effect on the mind of his reader. Olshausen says that the word refers only to the chronology, which Luke intended to observe in the main, but from which in minute details he deviated. But chronological order is not the only or principal signification of the word, and such a meaning ought not to be forced upon this passage, the whole narrative showing, as it does, a disregard, on the part of Luke, for the order of time. An orderly arrangement of the facts is all that is intended, and this stands opposed to the fragmentary and disjointed character of the narratives referred to in vs. 1, 2. *Most excellent*, not necessarily in a moral sense, since the epithet is applied to both Felix and Festus (Acts 23: 26; 24: 3; 26: 25). It refers rather to official dignity, and is applied to any person of rank and authority. In this instance, however, it is expressive also of the moral excellence of Theophilus. As to who this person was, we have no means of knowing. He was doubtless some person of rank and distinction, who lived out of Palestine, and had become a convert to Christianity. Olshausen conjectures

4 'That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

that he was a resident of Rome, but others, with more reason, refer his abode to Greece or Proconsular Asia. The name signifies a *lover of God, or beloved of God*; and hence it was regarded by some of the old interpreters as a mere appellative, under which the gospel was dedicated to all in every place, who loved and were beloved of God. But this opinion is now generally given up. The epithet, *most excellent*, is of itself sufficient to condemn such an interpretation.

4. Luke here assigns the reason for the composition of his gospel. It was that Theophilus, and by implication all others, who would inform themselves in regard to the origin of Christianity, and the facts and principles on which it was based, might have the means and opportunity thus to do. *Mightest know*. The original is intensive; *mightest know thoroughly, reach the full knowledge of*. It implies that from the imperfect narratives referred to in vs. 1, 2, no one could get an accurate and connected view of Christ's life and ministry. *The certainty*, i. e. the whole truth. *Hast been instructed*. The etymology of the verb refers it to oral instruction, from which is derived our words *catechism, catechist, and to catechize*. Copies of written works were so few and expensive, that oral instruction was the principal means of disseminating truth. Especially was this true, before the gospels were composed and given to the church. In this way had Theophilus been instructed in Christianity. He had received its rudiments as a *catechumen*. But the knowledge which he and others had thus received, was necessarily limited and imperfect. Oral teaching was the great instrument of diffusing the knowledge of Christ in the early days of the church. But had not the gospels been fully and accurately committed to writing, as great and abiding landmarks, oral instruction would have been found inadequate to



5 ¶ **T**HERE was 'in the days of Herod the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, 'of the course of Abia:

σ Mat. 2: 1.  
 & 1 Ch. 24: 10, 19; No. 12: 4, 17.

preserve the truth unadulterated and consistent, as the times were more and more remote from the age in which Jesus lived and suffered.

We learn from this Preface to Luke's gospel, that inspiration does not suspend the use and exercise of the mental powers. Luke was not a mere amanuensis, for he tells us that he has accurately traced down from their very source the truths he had written. In this investigation he was, however, under the guiding, superintending influence of God's Spirit, so that he made just such a selection and arrangement of facts, as best subserved the purpose for which the gospel was written. His general style, his choice of words, and the plan and arrangement of the work, were his own, and yet so interpenetrated were they by the Spirit, that it must be said of him, in the words of Peter (2 Pet. 1: 21), that "he spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost."

5-25. **AN ANGEL APPEARS TO ZACHARIAS IN THE TEMPLE.** *Jerusalem.* Here properly commences Luke's gospel, the preceding verses constituting what may be called the Preface. The reader will perceive at once, an alteration in the style, the construction being more simple, and abounding to a greater or less extent in Hebraisms. The whole gospel, however, bears marks of a careful and scholarly writer, and redeems the promise of accurate research and orderly arrangement made in the preface.

5. *In the days, &c.* See N. on Matt. 2: 1. Eras in the Old and New Testament, are marked by the life or times of some principal man. Thus in 4: 25, "in the days of Elias;" and v. 27, "in the time of Eliseus." *A certain priest.* Some expositors think that Zacharias was, at this time, the high priest. But

and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth.

6 And they were both 'right-

σ Ga. 7: 1; & 17: 1; 1 Kl. 9: 4; 3 Kl. 20: 3; Job 1: 1; Ac. 23: 1; & 24: 16; Phil. 3: 6

the epithet *certain*, forbids this, as also does the fact, that he belonged to one of the ordinary courses of priests doing temple service. *Zacharias*: whom Jehovah remembers. So *Elisabeth*: God her oath, or, my God hath sworn. The significancy of these names, borne by persons so intimately related to the Messianic times, is worthy of note. *The course of Abia* was the eighth in order of the twenty-four classes, into which David (1 Chron. 24: 1, 2) divided the posterity of Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron. Only four of these classes returned from the captivity, but from these was instituted the full number of classes, and their ancient order and names were retained. See Ezra 2: 36-39; Neh. 7: 39-42; 12: 1. The word rendered *course*, literally signifies, *daily service*, and hence was naturally transferred to the order or class of priests who officiated, of which courses, as has been remarked, there were twenty-four. "Each course attended two sabbaths and the six intervening days; so that on the Sabbath two courses officiated." Webster and Wilkinson. *And his wife, &c.* Luke is careful to show that both Zacharias and his wife were of the priestly line. Thus the family of John, as well as that of our Lord, was shown to be of illustrious origin. Josephus (Life, § 1) remarks, that to be of sacerdotal dignity, was with the Jews an indication of the splendor of a family.

6. The evangelist now proceeds to speak of the character and circumstances in life of these parents of John. *Righteous.* See N. on Matt. 1: 19. The word here indicates piety towards God, and integrity in all the relations of life. It refers to what is just and right in the sight of the law, rather than to goodness and benevolence of disposition, although the two qualities were doubt-

eous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren; and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

8 And it came to pass, that, while he executed the priest's

less combined both in Joseph and Zacharias. That legal righteousness is however especially referred to, is seen from the following explanatory clause, *walking in all, &c.*, which does not indicate absolute perfection, but simply extraordinary piety. The phrase, *before God*, denotes internal as well as external righteousness. No difference is here to be sought in *commandments* and *ordinances*, the words being combined to promote fullness and emphasis. Some however refer the former to moral precepts; the latter, to ceremonial rites and ordinances.

7. *And they had no child.* This was regarded by the Jews as one of the greatest misfortunes with which a family could be afflicted. The foundation of this feeling lay, perhaps, in the hope which each married couple may have entertained, of being the progenitors of the expected Messiah. *Were well stricken in years.* This does not mean bowed down and wrinkled with age, since Zacharias, at this time, could not have reached fifty years of age, which was the limit of the actual duties of the priestly office. The rendering, *were advanced in life*, would therefore be better, as well as more literal. If Elisabeth, as is quite likely, was nearly of the same age, and if after many years of married life they were yet without offspring, their prospects of having children must have been quite hopeless.

8. *Executed the priest's office*, i. e. performed the duties which pertained to his course, while engaged in temple service. One of the priests burned incense, another changed the show-bread on the sabbath day, and another took charge of the fire on the altar for burnt-

office before God 'in the order of his course,

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was 'to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

10 " And the whole multitude

Ex. 1 Ch. 24: 19; 2 Ch. 8: 14; & 31: 2. 7 Ex. 30: 7, 8; 1 Sa. 2: 28; 1 Ch. 23: 13; 2 Ch. 29: 11. m La. 16: 17; Ra. 8: 8, 4.

offerings. Thus their labors were apportioned, and a more responsible discharge of the various services secured from each individual. *Before God*, i. e. in his temple. *In the order of his course.* Each of the twenty-four courses served in rotation, but those belonging to a course, cast lots each day for the service they were respectively to perform. At this time, the course to which Zacharias belonged were serving in the temple, and it fell to him by lot to burn incense, which was the most honorable service, and could be performed only once on the same day by any priest, although incense was daily offered twice, at the morning and evening sacrifice.

9. *According to the custom*, or usage of the priestly office. These words belong to the following context. *His lot was to burn, &c.* See preceding Note. *When he went into the temple*; literally, *having gone into the temple*, i. e. into the holy place, but not into the inner sanctuary or *holy of holies*, into which the high priest only could enter, and that but once a year. The holy place or outer sanctuary, into which Zacharias entered to burn incense, was contiguous to the inner sanctuary or holy of holies, from which it was separated by a veil. See N. on Matt. 27: 51. In this apartment were the golden candlestick, the golden table, and the altar of incense, which was placed between them. See Ex. 40: 22-37.

10. *The whole multitude of worshippers.* *Were praying without*, i. e. in the court of the Israelites which fronted the sanctuary, where was the altar of incense. *At the time of incense.* "It was during the sacrifice on the great

of the people were praying without, at the time of incense.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

Ex. 30: 1.

altar, that the daily burning of the incense took place: one of the two priests, whose lot it was to offer incense, brought fire from off the altar of burnt-offering to the altar of incense, and then left the other priest there alone—who, on a signal from the priest presiding at the sacrifice, kindled the incense: see Ex. 40: 5, 26." Alford. Reference is had in Rev. 8: 3, 4, to this service, and the prayers of God's people, which were symbolically said to ascend upon the smoke of the incense. See also Ps. 141: 2. The incense was burnt morning and evening, and this also was analogous to the prayers of God's people, the stated season of which is usually the morning and evening.

11. *And there appeared, &c.* This angelic appearance probably took place near the close of the burning of incense, for in v. 21 the people are said to have been waiting for Zacharias, and wondering why he tarried so long in the temple. The reference of this vision by sceptics to the nervous excitement of Zacharias, engaged now probably for the first time in this priestly service, is deprived of all its force by the length of time at which he must have stood by the altar of incense, before he was accosted by the angel. Nor is it at all probable, that one who had so long exercised the functions of the priestly office, should now for the first time have entered into the sanctuary to burn incense. *Standing on the right side.* This was deemed by the Greeks and other ancient nations, the quarter in which to look for favorable omens and appearances. *Of the altar of incense,* and therefore between that and the golden candlestick, and probably on the south side, as Zacharias was standing on the north side in front of the altar.

12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife

o Ju. 6: 22; & 18: 23; Da. 10: 8; ver. 29; ch. 3: 9; Ac. 10: 4; Ro. 1: 17.

The angel must have stood, therefore, very near to him, which may account in part for the great fear with which he beheld the vision.

12. *He was troubled,* i. e. was in a state of trepidation. Such celestial appearances usually produced great alarm, being thought to betoken speedy death. See Judges 6: 22, 23; 13: 22; Dan. 10: 7, 12; Rev. 1: 17. See also N. on 5: 8. Olshausen considers this fear, in part, an expression of the feeling of sinfulness. *Fear,* i. e. terror, afflict.

13. The angel hastens to reassure him, with the usual form of encouragement, *fear not.* See 2: 10, also Dan. 10: 12, 19; Rev. 1: 17. *Thy prayer is heard.* As Zacharias had given up all hope of offspring, this must not be referred to prayer offered at this time, but to the petitions which he and his wife had put up aforetime for this blessing. They had doubtless oftentimes mourned that their prayer was not heard and answered, so little did they know of the ways of God, who often tries the faith of his people by deferring for a time the answer to their request, which it is his will and merciful intention to grant. See Dan. 9: 23. But while Zacharias had ceased to pray for offspring, he had not done this from a rebellious spirit, but in cheerful acquiescence to the divine will, and hence his mind was in a proper state to receive the blessing. *Thy wife Elisabeth, &c.* This shows the special object of the prayer of Zacharias. *Thou shalt call his name John.* These names of divine appointment were usually symbolical of some blessing or grace accompanying them, of which they were the pledge. *John* signifies *given* or *bestowed graciously of God.* This name

Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink

*p* Va. 60, 68. *q* V. 58.  
*r* Nu. 6: 8; Ju. 18: 4; ch. 7: 88.

was appropriately given to the child, both as denoting God's gracious answer to the prayer of Zacharias, and the office of John, who was to be the forerunner of the Saviour of mankind.

14. *Thou shalt have joy and gladness.* The original is highly intensive: *joy and exultation* (literally, *a leaping for joy*) *shall be to you*. This is not to be referred to the simple fact, that a child had been born to him so unexpectedly, but to John's eminent piety and evident possession of the divine favor, which would fill his father's heart with emotions of joy. The indications were not doubtful, even in his extreme youth, that he was to be a zealous reformer and preacher of righteousness. *Many shall rejoice, &c.* The joy of Zacharias was to be shared by many others, *at his birth*, i. e. because a man of such eminent piety and usefulness had been born upon the earth. This joy reached its culminating point, when thousands flocked to John's ministry from all parts of the land (see Matt. 3: 5).

15. *For he shall be great, &c.* This is given as the ground of the general rejoicing in consequence of the birth of John. *In the sight of the Lord*, i. e. in the manifest tokens of God's favor and blessing. Zacharias is virtually cautioned against supposing that his son's greatness would consist in worldly honor or preferment. *In the sight of God* may also be put in contrast with the eye of man, which looks only upon the outward appearance (1 Sam. 16: 7), and is affected by external pomp and elevation. *Shall drink neither wine, &c.* He was to be bound with the Nazarene vow, like Samson (Jud. 13: 2-5;

neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16 'And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

17 'And he shall go before him

*s* Jo. 1: 5; Ga. 1: 15. *t* Mal. 4: 5, 6.  
*u* Mal. 4: 5; Mat. 11: 14; Ma. 9: 12.

12-23), before his birth. The conditions of this vow were, to let the hair grow, to abstain from wine and all intoxicating drink, and from vinegar also; to eat no clusters, and to avoid contamination from corpses, bones, and sepulchres. This vow was sometimes taken for life, and sometimes for a limited period. It was imposed on John for life. The word here translated *strong drink*, denotes any intoxicating liquor, made from grain, fruit, honey, dates, and the like. *And he shall be filled, &c.* This is given as the reason why he was to be a Nazarene from his very birth. Olshausen well remarks: "in the life of a Nazarene, there appears concentrated the strict legal character which John, the close and crowning stone, as it were, of the old dispensation, was called to exhibit. This form of piety is not, therefore, to be regarded as the highest, because a heavenly messenger ascribes it to John as an excellence; it is rather assigned to him as a duty, as being specially suited to his whole calling and destination." *Even from his mother's womb*, i. e. from his very birth. No argument can be drawn from v. 44, that this inspiring or action of the Holy Ghost took place upon John before his birth, as Olshausen and Meyer seem to suppose. Had this been so, instead of *from*, it would have been *in* his mother's womb.

16. John's success as a reformer is here predicted. We are not told how many were converted, under his preaching, from a low and cold formalism, or more open vice. But that the number was great, is evident, not only from this passage, but from Matt. 3: 5, 6;



in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobe-

dient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Mark 1: 5; Luke 3: 7, and other places, where his ministry and baptism are referred to. *Shall he turn, &c.* The Jewish people at the time of John's advent were sunk in formalism and sin. It was his mission to arouse them from this spiritual lethargy, and excite in them lively, active piety. This in many instances, by the grace and power of God, he effected. But the effect of his preaching was not to be limited to the actual conversions from sin to holiness which attended it. The whole nation was shaken and aroused to thought (see 3: 15), and thus the way was prepared for the mission of Him, before whose face John was sent as the messenger, to prepare the way and announce His coming. *Their God, Jehovah* in a peculiar sense was the God of Israel. Theirs were "the adoption and the glory and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God and the promises." Rom. 9: 4. But this did not forbid the induction of other nations into like relationship and privileges. Such has been the great error of the Jews down to the present time, and such were the prejudices which kept the apostles from proclaiming the gospel to the Gentiles, until impelled thereto by the direct and peremptory teachings of the Spirit (Acts 10: 15, 20; 11: 12).

17. This verse may be paraphrased: And he shall come having the zealous, energetic spirit of Elijah, and shall inculcate the universal principles of peace, and prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah. *Shall go before him* like one sent forward by an Eastern king, to prepare the way, and make ready suitable places of reception. *Before him.* The pronoun here refers grammatically to the preceding *Lord their God*. But that in reality it here refers to Christ, in whom "dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2: 9), there can be no question. *In the spirit and power of Elias*, i. e. having the zeal, energy, and

boldness of that Old Testament reformer. On the many points of resemblance between John and Elijah, see my note on Matt. 3: 1. An objection against the verity of this angelic appearance, is sought here from the fact, that the angel quoted Scripture. But, as Kendrick remarks: "it is difficult to see why an angel, in holding communication with men, should not quote Scripture in the same direct and formal way, and for the same purposes of proof or illustration, as did the Saviour, or the Holy Spirit speaking through those whom he inspired." *To turn the hearts, &c.* A reference is thought to be had here to the conciliation of jarring and discordant sects and political feuds, by a reformation of the morals and religious views of the people, under the preaching of John. The general sentiment of the passage is evident. The good were to be in the ascendancy, and the wicked, through the reforming influence of this preacher, were to become like them. This is not to be pressed to teach, that every wicked person would be brought to repentance by John's ministry. The idea is that there was to be a general reformation, the fruits of which were to be felt throughout the entire nation. In respect to this quotation of Malachi by the angel, the first member *to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children*, corresponds well with the original prophecy. But the words, *the disobedient to the wisdom of the just*, has no verbal resemblance to the corresponding phrase, *the heart of the children to their fathers*, in Malachi. But by regarding *disobedient* as put for *children*, and *just*, for *fathers*, a substitution both natural and admissible, the correspondence between the quotation and the original will be quite fully preserved. Folly and disobedience are natural to children (Prov. 22: 15), while age has ever been regarded as the depository of wisdom. This general and well-acknowledged truth, however, is

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, 'Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

19 And the angel answering, said unto him, I am 'Gabriel,

γ Ge. 17: 17. δ Da. 8: 16; & 9: 21, 22, 23; Mat. 18: 10; He. 1: 14.

here to be taken in a spiritual sense. *To the wisdom.* The original preposition implies not only the entering upon, but continuance in the state of wisdom here predicted of the just. See N. on the preposition *en*, in Matt. 8: 6. *To make ready a people*, &c. This seems to explain the figurative language of the preceding clause. The conciliation, there referred to by the union of principles the most opposite, is here declared to be the victory of truth and righteousness, and the general preparation of the people for the advent of the Messiah. The allusion is to Is. 43: 21.

18. *Whereby* (i. e. by what sign) *shall I know this?* A similar question was proposed by Abraham (Gen. 15: 8), and by Gideon (Jud. 6: 17), and by Hezekiah (Isa. 38: 22). In the case of Zacharias, there was so little faith in the angelic message, that the sign of the fulfilment of the promise was also a punishment of his unbelief. *For I am an old man*, &c. How unlike the strong and unwavering faith of Abraham, whose age, when Isaac was promised to him, was almost twice that of Zacharias. Compare Gen. 17: 1, 17; Rom. 4: 18-22; Heb. 11: 12. *Well stricken in years.* See N. on v. 7.

19. The angel now condescends to inform Zacharias of his name and angelic dignity. *Gabriel* (i. e. man of God), an archangel sent on special messages of love to men. See Dan. 8: 16; 9: 21. He was subsequently sent to Mary (v. 26), on a similar but much more glorious errand. So far as we know, it was not until after the captivity, that the names of angels became known to the Jews. The Rabbis say that the names of angels were brought up with the Jews from Babylon, from

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that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

20 And behold, 'thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things

α Ez. 3: 26; & 24: 27.

which some have argued that these names were borrowed from the heathen system. But Alford well remarks that "the persons and order of angels were known long before, and their names formed matter of subsequent revelation to Daniel." *That stand in the presence of God* as one of his chief ministers or attendants. See N. on Matt. 18: 10 (end). *And am sent.* Gabriel adds this in confirmation of his message. He came not of himself, but was expressly sent to announce these things to Zacharias. *And to shew thee*, &c. This expands the preceding clause, and reiterates the joyful nature of his message. The verb employed here is the same, which is used in the New Testament of preaching the gospel. While it has not here its full evangelical import, our Lord not having yet appeared on earth, it was nevertheless employed by Gabriel of the first message introductory to the gospel dispensation, preëminently one of *glad tidings* to men.

20. *Behold.* See N. on Matt. 1: 20. *Shalt be dumb*; literally, *shalt be* (in the condition of) *being silent*. This is rendered still more emphatic by the negative clause, *not able to speak*, which follows. *Until the day*, &c. It was the eighth day after the birth of the child, that the punishment of his unbelief was remitted, and the power of speech again restored to him. *Because*; literally, *on account of these things*, an emphatic plural for *this very thing*. The sentence is pronounced upon Zacharias in terms of severe and expressive fulness. Here it is distinctly averred, that unbelief was the cause of his punishment. At the same time, we must not lose sight of the love with which it

shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a

vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

23 And it came to pass, that as soon as 'the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his

b See 2 KL 11: 5; 1 Ch. 9: 28.

was tempered, in that it was a gracious sign of the due fulfilment of the promise. *Which shall be fulfilled, &c.* The preposition in the original gives this shade of signification: *which shall take place at their season* (i. e. in their appointed time and order), in *complete fulfilment*. The idea is, that the events spoken of, such as the birth, naming, education, and mission of the child, would all occur in orderly succession, and in exact accordance with the prediction by the angel. This clause is therefore an emphatic reiteration of the certainty of the things promised. How wondrous were the affability and condescension of this angel. The offence of Zacharias was met by no stern rebuke, but a simple announcement, that the sign which he required, would be the temporary punishment of his unbelief.

21. *And the people waited, &c.* The priest did not usually tarry long within the holy place, lest the people, whose representative he was, should be alarmed with the apprehension that divine vengeance had overtaken him for some failure in the discharge of his priestly duty. *Marvelled*, i. e. greatly wondered. *Tarried so long, &c.* This shows very clearly that Zacharias had nearly or quite finished his service, before Gabriel appeared to him. How long the interview lasted, we have no means of knowing. It was probably however of short duration, but Zacharias may have remained some moments in the temple, in amazement at what he had seen and heard, before he came forth to the people. The time would thus be prolonged far beyond what was usual on such occasions.

22. *He could not speak unto them.* It appears from v. 62, that Zacharias was afflicted with the loss of hearing as well as of speech. If so, he could be accosted intelligently by signs only, such as are addressed to the deaf. This, and his continued speechlessness, excited in them the belief that he had seen a vision. In this they were confirmed by the signs which he made to that effect. His whole appearance, as Olshausen remarks, was doubtless expressive of violent excitement, which helped to confirm the people in the impression that he had been visited by some supernatural appearance. Reland refers the verb *speak* to the usual benediction, pronounced by the priest who had offered incense. See Levit. 9: 22; Num. 6: 23. *For he beckoned unto them; more literally, continued beckoning, &c. Speechless.* A different word from the one employed in v. 20, and used of those who were deaf as well as dumb.

23. *As soon as the days, &c.* When the week of service had expired, the priests were at liberty to return to their homes, until the courses were all completed, and it came their turn again to serve. *Ministration*, i. e. public or official service. *Were accomplished*, so far as related to this occasion. He was not the less a priest, during this interval in his public ministrations, but he was one who had leave of absence for a definite time from the temple service. *He departed, &c.* It may well be imagined that he did not tarry long in Jerusalem, when he was in such a condition, and had such tidings to communicate to his family. *His own house.* This was in the hill country, in a town of

wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to 'take away my reproach among men.

26 And in the sixth month

c Ga. 30: 23; Ia. 4: 1; & 54: 1, 4.

Judea, probably not far from Hebron. See N. on v. 39.

24. The event here spoken of took place, no doubt, soon after the return of Zacharias to his house. *Hide herself*. The literal signification, *to hide herself with care*, shows that she withdrew herself wholly from the sight of others, selecting some place of total concealment. Various reasons have been assigned for this. Doddridge attributes it to her desire to enjoy opportunity for those extraordinary devotions which this wonderful favor of Providence demanded. Such also is the opinion of Kuinoel and Trollope. Webster and Wilkinson refer it to her wish to carry out, from the beginning, the design of God for the complete separation of her son. Olshausen and Alford regard it as a natural wish to hide her condition, till all uncertainty was removed. It is better, in my judgment, to refer it mainly to the sense of delicacy, natural to persons in such a condition, and heightened in this instance by the age of Elisabeth, which would subject her to more than usual notice and remark.

25. *Thus* refers to the blessing spoken of in the preceding verse. *Hath the Lord dealt with me*, in conferring upon me this great and unexpected blessing. *Wherein he looked on me*. The pronoun *me* is not in the original, and a better sense, as Alford well observes, would be, *hath condescended to remove my reproach*. If the common translation is to be preferred, the words *looked on me*, must be taken in their usual scriptural sense, *to look upon one with favor*. The following clause, *to take away, &c.*, denotes that in which the divine favor consisted. Barrenness

the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin 'espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

d Mat. 1: 18; ch. 2: 4, 5.

was in those times such a reproach, as well as deprivation of a great blessing (see N. on v. 7), that Elisabeth, in the fullness of her gratitude to God, recurs to the removal of this odium, as the principal feature in the blessing bestowed upon her. Olshausen remarks, that the spiritual character of the New Testament renders such temporal blessings entirely subordinate.

26-38. AN ANGEL APPEARS UNTO MARY. Nazareth.

26. In this verse we learn the comparative age of Jesus and John; and the place of the residence of Joseph and Mary here given throws light on Matt. 2: 23. *Sixth month* of Elisabeth's pregnancy, reference being had to the five months spoken of in v. 24. *Was sent from God*. See N. on v. 19. Nazareth. See N. on Matt. 2: 23.

27. *Espoused* refers to the betrothal before marriage. See N. on Matt. 1: 18. *Of the house of David*. Webster and Wilkinson (as also Alford) refer these words to Joseph instead of Mary, and remark that there is no direct proof that Mary was of the house of David, although it seems almost necessarily implied in such passages as Acts 2: 30; Rom. 1: 3; Heb. 7: 14. But is not this taught beyond a question in the genealogical table in 3: 23-38? If not, we must concede to that record, or to the corresponding one in Matt. 1: 2-16, more obscurity, confusion, and absurdity even, than to any other genealogical table whatever. For two writers making any pretension to veracity, to give the pedigree of one and the same man, through the whole line of his ancestors, under two different and distinct names, is proof positive that one or the other is wanting in truth,

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, 'Hail, *thou that art* highly favored, 'the Lord is with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

29 And when she saw *him*, 'she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto  
*e* Da. 9: 22; & 10: 12. *f* Ju. 6: 12. *g* Ver. 12.

or is laboring under an egregious mistake. But see N. on 3: 23-38.

28. *The angel*, i. e. Gabriel. *Came into her dwelling*, or the apartment where she then was. *Hail*. See N. on Matt. 26: 49. *Highly favored* is to be referred to the spiritual blessings already bestowed upon Mary, the words *the Lord is with thee*, being added to show in what respect she was endued with such high favor. *Blessed art thou among women*. General favor with God is referred to in the preceding words, but here the special blessing of which she is now to be the recipient, is brought to view. The expression, *blessed art thou among women*, according to Hebrew usage, has the force of *most blessed of women*, and implies the bestowal of some great and special blessing. It was this which threw Mary into such deep reflection, as to what this strange salutation meant.

29, 30. *And when she saw him*, &c. It was both his appearance and saying which disturbed her. *Cast in her mind*, i. e. reflected, pondered over. So tumultuous were her feelings at this angelic appearance and strange salutation, that she was incapable of reply. She could only dwell in amazement on the words which fell so graciously upon her ear. *What manner of salutation this should be*, i. e. what might be its purport as addressed to her. *Fear not*. Thus Gabriel had before encouraged Zacharias, when troubled at his presence. In both instances, the ground of confidence was declared to be the favor of God shown to Zacharias in the

her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.

31 'And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and 'shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, 'and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and 'the Lord God

*A* Ia. 7: 14; Mat. 1: 21. *d* Ch. 2: 21. *e* Ma. 5: 7. *f* 2 Sa. 7: 11, 12; Ia. 9: 6, 7; & 16: 5; Je. 23: 5; Pa. 133: 11; Ra. 3: 7.

answer to his prayer, and to Mary, in the high honor to which she was about to be exalted. *Hast found favor*. This was not from any personal worthiness on her part, or any immaculacy of moral character, but from the abundant grace of God bestowed upon her, as upon all others who earnestly seek divine favor and guidance. Special reference is had here to the great blessing about to be conferred upon her, in being the mother of the promised Messiah. *With God*. By the force of the preposition, (laid up) *with God*, the representation being, that she had found and was about to enjoy a blessing long reserved in store for her.

31. In this verse we are conducted back to the very origin and beginning of what is referred to in Matt. 1: 20, by way of explanation, to dispel the doubt of Joseph in regard to the virtue of his betrothed wife. The Annunciation of course preceded that divine communication to Joseph by several months. Luke here makes good his declaration in the Preface, that "all things from the very first" he had carefully sought out, and would unfold in order to the most excellent Theophilus. *Shalt call* has the nature of a command. *Jesus*. In the repetition of this direction afterwards to Joseph (Matt. 1: 21), the reason is given why he was to be thus named.

32. *He shall be great*. This does not refer to temporal greatness, but to the glory and power to which he was to be exalted as mediatorial king in Zion, Pa. 2: 6. *Shall be called* refers not only

shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

33 "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and

Ma. Da. 2: 44; & 7: 14, 27; Ob. 21; ML 4: 7; Jn. 12: 34; Ha. 1: 8.

to the reality, but universal acknowledgment of his divine Sonship. *The Son of the Highest* (see N. on Matt. 1: 20, end). The absence of the article in the original has led some, who deny the supreme divinity of Christ, to translate a *Son*, &c. But they overlook the peculiar use and power of the article, which is simply to point out some person or thing, which has previously been mentioned, or is so well known, that it may be regarded as having already been before the mind of the reader or hearer. *Son of the Highest* is as special and definite an appellation as Jesus, Messiah, Christ, or any other of the names of our Lord. Who would think of interpreting *thou shalt call his name Jesus*, in Matt. 1: 21, because the article is wanting, a *Jesus*. In respect to the phrase *the Highest*, see Ns. on Matt. 6: 9; Mark 5: 7. The *Son of the Highest* was evidently a Messianic title, like *Son of the Blessed*, in Mark 14: 61. *The Lord God shall give*, &c. This promise of dominion was made primarily and in its lowest sense to Solomon (2 Sam. 7: 12, 13), who was thus the type of Christ. In its higher and spiritual sense, it was prophetically made to the Messiah, who according to the flesh was to spring from David (Rom. 1: 3). A comparison with v. 34, will show that Mary had no difficulty in the fulfillment of this angelic message, arising from family descent, but from the fact that she was not actually married, and was therefore incapable of maternity. This shows that she was herself a descendant of David, and fully aware of this distinguished honor, a fact which throws a flood of light on the genealogy of our Lord, as given by Luke (3: 23-38).

33. *He shall reign*. Both this and the word *throne* in v. 32, are to be interpreted of spiritual dominion. *House*

of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered

of Jacob is here put for the Israelitish nation, which, in the Messianic times, was to embrace all who were partakers of the faith of Abraham (Gal. 3: 7), whether they were Jews or Gentiles. On the use of the word *forever*, see N. on Matt. 25: 46. The term is here defined and rendered more specific by the negative clause which follows: *and of his kingdom there shall be no end*. "This leads to the right view of the limitation here made of the Messiah's kingdom to the house of David. A dominion which extends beyond all time, cannot be conceived as limited by political boundaries." Olshausen. This is referred by Prof. Stuart to Christ's mediatorial kingdom, which in the strict sense of the term, will come to a close, when the redeemed shall all be gathered in, and the mediatorial functions shall be no longer needed (see 1 Cor. 15: 24). This in the special sense intended is true, yet Christ will never cease to be King of his people. He will ever be adored as the Lamb of God, that was slain to redeem his people from endless death.

34. These words of Mary are not those of unbelief, but the outpouring of a childlike spirit, seeking for light on a subject so manifestly dark and mysterious. The words of the angel implied, that the conception should immediately take place, and as she was yet unmarried, she saw not how the promise could be fulfilled. "Believing inquiry, directed in a child-like spirit, is not to be blamed." Olshausen.

35. *The Holy Ghost*. As Christ was the Son of the Father and begotten of him (John 1: 14), this must be interpreted of the divine influence or energy, exerted through the agency of the Holy Ghost. As the Holy Ghost did not create the world, but only moved upon the chaotic mass, bringing

and said unto her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be

• Mat. 1: 20.

order out of confusion, so Christ was not begotten of the Holy Ghost, although the energy and influence of the Spirit was instrumentally employed in the conception of Mary. That this is the true sense of this mysterious passage, appears evident from the next clause, *the power of the Highest*, where in the original the omission of the article refers it to the divine power in general, and not specifically to that of the Holy Spirit. *Shall come upon thee*, i. e. shall rest upon and operate in thee. Allusion is had, as Olshausen thinks, to Gen. 1: 2, where the Spirit of God is said to *have moved upon the face of the waters*, which the LXX. translate *came upon or hovered over the waters*. There are between these two events points of such striking resemblance, that the inference is almost inevitable, that the one is typical of the other, just as the natural creation of man is regarded as a type of the new creation of the soul in Christ Jesus. The analogy is not, however, to be pressed too far. *Shall overshadow thee*. The imagery is borrowed from a cloud, and not, as Grotius thinks, from a bird. As the shadow of a cloud rests upon and circumfuses the summit of a hill or mountain, so the divine influence was to be exerted and rest upon Mary, for the production of the intended effect. This imagery implies nothing gross or material, but simply the operation of the divine energy in the conception of Christ. He was begotten not by ordinary generation, but by the direct and miraculous agency of God, through the special energy and influence of the Holy Ghost. This is all which is revealed to us of the wondrous and mysterious transaction. All speculation on this subject is presumptuous and unavailing. The fact is all we know, and with this we should rest contented. *Therefore also*

born of thee, shall be called 'the Son of God.

36 And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also con-

• Mat. 14: 22; & 26: 62, 64; Ma. 1: 1; Jn. 1: 34; & 20: 31; Ac. 8: 37; Ro. 1: 4.

*that holy thing*, &c. It is most unequivocally declared here, that Jesus was called the Son of God, because in his human nature he was begotten of God, and sustained therefore a relation to him, such as has been borne by no other person who has ever lived upon the earth. Olshausen says that in a *physical* sense, Christ is here declared to be the Son of God, but this phrase "in a *metaphysical* sense usually denotes the eternal existence of Christ, which he has with the Father, his relation as God to God, as the manifestation of the unseen God." See upon this subject my Note on Matt. 28: 19. *Holy thing*. The neuter is here employed in accordance with general usage, which withholds the idea of sex from an infant, until it is indicated by name or otherwise. The words translated *that holy thing which shall be born of thee*, is simply in the original *thy holy offspring*. *Shall be called the Son of God*, i. e. known and acknowledged by this high appellation. The article is here also wanting in the original, but the connection is such, that no one would dream of translating it a *son of God*. See N. on v. 32.

36. *Thy cousin Elisabeth*. This must have been on the mother's side, for Elisabeth was of the tribe of Levi (see v. 5), and Mary of the tribe of Judah, the pedigree being always reckoned on the paternal side. *She hath also conceived*, &c. In order further to encourage Mary and strengthen her faith, the angel acquaints her with the great blessing bestowed upon Elisabeth. It is not wonderful that this event was yet unknown to Mary, the intercourse between families in different sections of the country in those days being infrequent and oftentimes suffering long interruption. An additional reason for Mary's ignorance is found in the con-

ceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren:

37 For<sup>g</sup> with God nothing shall be impossible.

38 And Mary said, Behold the

<sup>g</sup> Ga. 18: 14; Je. 32: 17; Zec. 8: 6; Mat. 19: 26; Ma. 10: 27; ch. 18: 27; Ro. 4: 21.

cealment of her situation, practised by Elisabeth during the first five months of her pregnancy. *This is the sixth month.* This renders definite the time referred to in v. 26. *Who was called barren.* See N. on v. 32.

37. *For with God, &c.* This is the great and crowning reason why Mary was to rest assured of the accomplishment of all these things, although apparently so contrary to the natural course of events. *Nothing*; literally, *not every word*, in the Hebrew idiom an emphatic *nothing at all*. *Word* has here, as in Matt. 4: 4 (on which see Note), the sense of *thing*. See also 2: 15. *Shall be impossible.* The future is here employed, with special reference to the event just predicted, although it expresses also a universal truth.

38. The soothing and strengthening effect of the angel's words is seen in Mary's reply, *Behold thy handmaid, &c.* These are the words of confidence in the divine declaration, and a cheerful disposal of herself to the sovereign will and pleasure of God. In the strength and simplicity of her faith, and ready obedience to the divine command, how striking is the contrast between her and Eve, through whose unbelief and disobedience such direful consequences ensued to the human race. Doddridge extols the pious acquiescence of Mary to the divine will, inasmuch as the event here predicted might have endangered her reputation, if not her life, by the apparent proof which it furnished, that she had violated the faith of her espousal to Joseph. Such would have been the result, had not Joseph also in due time been instructed as to the nature of the transaction. See Matt. 1: 19-21. Alford and others

handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, 'into a city of Juda,

<sup>g</sup> Jos. 21: 9, 10, 11.

think that Mary's conception is to be dated from the utterance of these words. Bengel conjectures that it took place in the city of Judah (v. 39). It is sufficient, however, for us to know that every thing happened as had been predicted by the angel, and it were useless for us to inquire into the precise time and manner of the transaction. As to what Bengel affirms, that had the conception taken place in Nazareth, he would have been called a Nazarene on his own account instead of his parents', we may reply that the birthplace is what usually determines a man's native town or country; and the word *Nazarene* looks to a deeper significance, than the mere fact of a residence in Nazareth. See N. on 2: 23.

39. *Arose and went*, in consequence of what the angel had said respecting the situation of Elisabeth. *In those days.* Alford thinks that Joseph had been informed, through the *pronuba*, of Mary's condition before her visit to Elisabeth, which might have happened in three or four weeks from the time of her pregnancy. He argues this from the fact, that as a betrothed virgin she could not travel, whereas, after Joseph had taken her home (Matt. 1: 24), she could with propriety visit her kinswoman as here related. But I am inclined to the opinion of those commentators, who place Joseph's discovering of Mary's condition in the fourth or fifth month of her pregnancy, and therefore after her visit to Elisabeth. As it was in the sixth month subsequent to Elisabeth's conception that the Annunciation took place, and as Mary stayed with Elisabeth about three months (v. 56), after which time, as is evident from v. 57, John was born,



40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

41 And it came to pass, that

when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb : and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.

she must have left Nazareth almost immediately after the visit of the angel, and no space is therefore found for the three or four weeks, which Alford thinks intervened before she left Nazareth for the hill country. That she left very soon after the Annunciation, is evident also from the haste with which she prosecuted her journey, and which is quite inconsistent with the supposition that she spent several weeks in Nazareth, before she set out on her visit to Elisabeth.

*Hill country* of Judah. The portion of Palestine originally allotted to the tribe of Judah, was divided in accordance with its natural features into the southern district, or the plain bordering on the Mediterranean Sea; the hill country of Judah, running through the centre from north to south; and the district of Judah (see N. on Matt. 3:1). *Into a city of Judah.* "The conjecture of Reland is probably correct, that *Juda* is a softened form for *Juta* or *Juttah* (in Hebrew), a city of the priests in the mountains of Judah south of Hebron. Josh. 15:55; 21:16. The place still exists under the same name." Robinson. Some commentators think that Hebron is referred to. *With haste*, such as results from zeal and eager desire. This is the original sense of the word, and well accords with Mary's eagerness to congratulate her kinswoman, and relate the wondrous message which she herself had received from the angel.

40, 41. Some think that during the time of Elisabeth's seclusion, she absented herself from Zachariah's house. But such a supposition is unnatural and unnecessary. She doubtless enjoyed the comforts of home, but remained secluded from all company in some retired apartment of the house. After five months of concealment, she permitted herself to receive the congratulations of her friends, her situation

being no longer a matter of doubt, and the motives which prompted her to retirement, whatever they were, no longer existing. *The salutation of Mary*, referred to in v. 40. There were various forms of salutation amongst the ancient Hebrews, such as "Be thou blessed of Jehovah;" "The blessing of Jehovah be upon thee;" "May God be with thee;" "May peace be yours," &c. The latter was the more common form of salutation. See Ruth 2:4; Judg. 19:20; 1 Sam. 25:26; 2 Sam. 20:9; Ps. 129:8. These salutations were accompanied with gestures and inflections of the body, varying according to the dignity and station of the person saluted. Some erroneously refer the salutation of Mary here spoken of, to that addressed to her by the angel, and supposed to be rehearsed by her to Elisabeth. But this view is not justified by the context. *The babe leaped*, &c. Such a movement of the fœtus is often the result of sudden excitement, yet the reference to it by Luke, and the words of Elisabeth (v. 44), show that it was attributable here to a secret and powerful spiritual influence. The verb is properly employed of the leaping and frisking for joy of young animals, and denotes here something more than the natural movements of the unborn child. *Was filled*, &c. This attaches the weight of inspiration to the words she uttered in reply to Mary's salutation.

42. *With a loud voice*, as of one excited to great transport of mind. *Blessed art thou*, &c. This was not an ordinary salutation, but one in the very words employed by the angel (v. 28), of whose appearance to Mary she was probably yet ignorant. *Blessed is the fruit*, &c. Here again she must have been indebted to the illuminating influence of the Spirit, for her knowledge of Mary's conception. Elisabeth blesses Mary and her unborn child, but this

42 And she spake out with a loud voice and said, 'Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me ?

r Ver. 28; Ju. 5: 24.

implies no other superiority than that of age. John, in obedience to the requirements of the ceremonial law, baptized Jesus, although so much his inferior. It was meet that the aged Elisabeth should bless her young friend, and that John, the minister of God's law, should in the act of baptism be our Lord's official superior. Such instances of temporary superiority founded upon age or office, are not uncommon upon the pages of history.

43. Here Elisabeth assumes the language of humility, and expresses her wonder that she had been deemed worthy of such a visit from Mary. *Whence is this to me*, i. e. how is it that such an unexpected honor has been conferred upon me. *My Lord*. Elisabeth seems to have been the first one who employed this title, of such common use among Christians. Such an expression, made of an unborn infant, can be attributed only to the inspiration of the Spirit, with which she was at this time filled.

44. This verse stands connected with the preceding one, as denoting the reason why Elisabeth knew Mary to be the mother of the long expected Messiah. Although this knowledge was the result of divine revelation, speaking, as she did, under the influence of the Spirit, yet she refers it to the effect which Mary's salutation had upon her unborn child. In this we see the natural expression of one in the peculiar circumstances of Elisabeth, watching with intense interest every movement of her precious burden. The words *for joy*, give emphasis to the verb, which of itself denotes a joyous movement. See N. on v. 41. Bengel says that the word *for* in this verse, seems to indicate that

44 For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

the conception of Mary, or the time when she became in very deed the mother of Christ, was at the same moment when the babe leaped for joy. But see N. on v. 38.

45. The language of Elisabeth here passes from the second to the third person, and must be looked upon in the light of a prayer or invocation of blessings upon Mary. *Blessed is she that believed*. The implied allusion to the unbelief of Zacharias, which some expositors find here, is forbidden by the state of Elisabeth's mind, wholly engrossed, as it was, with the blessed condition of Mary, as the mother of the expected Messiah. Her words are to be taken as the natural and spontaneous outpouring of pious emotion, in view of Mary's great faith. *For there shall be, &c.* As it stands in our common translation, this is given as a reason why she pronounces a blessing on Mary, for her unshaken faith in the divine promise. But some excellent critics adopt this as the true rendering, *blessed is she who believed that there shall be a performance, &c.* This is grammatical, and affords a good and consistent sense. But the common translation pleases me better, for there is a reciprocal relation thus preserved between the clauses, her belief being strengthened by the assurance of God's faithfulness to his promise, and the things promised rendered certain of fulfilment by the strong faith, which is made the condition of their performance. Reference is had in this passage to the promises made in vs. 32, 33. These had been revealed to Elisabeth by the Holy Ghost, under whose influence she was speaking, for there is no evidence that Mary had yet uttered any

46 And Mary said, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

ε 1 Sa. 2: 1; Ps. 84: 2, 8; & 85: 9; Hab. 3: 18.

thing beyond the usual words of salvation. *To her* who has believed. The expression, although in form indefinite, is designed to apply directly to Mary. *From the Lord*, i. e. by his angel.

46. Mary is now also filled with a holy ecstasy, and breaks forth into expressions of joy and thankfulness. While we are not to suppose that she understood the full import of the words she was inspired to utter, we cannot but remark how conversant she is shown to be with the Old Testament Scriptures. Many of her words bear a striking resemblance to those spoken by Hannah (1 Sam. 2: 1-10), and to the humble and thankful expressions of David (2 Sam. 7: 18-21). *My soul* is put, according to Hebrew usage, for the pronoun of the first person. *Doth magnify*, i. e. extol, praise. Compare with this commencement of Mary's song of praise, Ps. 31: 7. *The Lord* here refers to God, the supreme Lord.

47. *My spirit*, &c. This, according to the structure of Hebrew poetry, constitutes a parallelism with the preceding verse. If any distinction is to be sought in this place, and in 1 Thess. 5: 23, between *soul* and *spirit*—which seems to be a common periphrastic expression for the whole internal man—we are to refer the former to the lower and animal nature of man, which he has in common with irrational animals, the latter to the higher rational nature, which belongs to him alone. This distinction found a prominent place in the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy. *Hath rejoiced*. A strong expression of joy; literally, *hath exulted*, so as to leap for joy. In *God my Saviour*, not in the low sense of raising her from a state of earthly obscurity, but in the high spiritual sense of bringing to her salvation through the promised Messiah. Some expositors find here an implied proof

48 For 'he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for behold, from henceforth "all generations shall call me blessed.

ε 1 Sa. 1: 11; Ps. 138: 6.  
ε Mal. 3: 19; ch. 11: 27.

of the divinity of Christ. That Mary in this holy and spiritual frame of mind should have caught a glimpse of the character of the Messiah, as an Almighty Saviour, is not improbable, although I should hesitate to refer these words directly or indirectly to other than the supreme Jehovah.

48. This and the following verse furnish the ground of Mary's ascription of praise in vs. 46, 47. *Hath regarded*, i. e. looked favorably upon. *The low estate* has primary reference to outward condition or circumstances. It would, however, deprive this passage of its principal beauty and force, to refer it here solely to Mary's humble position in life. Speaking, as she evidently was, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, she could not have placed so low an estimate on the peculiar richness of the blessing conferred upon her, as to have referred it to mere temporal exaltation. We must therefore regard her words as having primary reference to lowliness and humility of spirit, which had now met their reward, in the honor to which she had been raised in being the mother of the promised Messiah. So Olshausen: *low estate* must be considered "rather as the expression of conscious inward poverty, which could discover no pre-eminence in herself, because of which such happiness should have fallen to her lot." *For behold*. The reason for the preceding declaration is so striking, that Mary calls attention to it by the interjection. *From henceforth*. From this time onward. *All generations*, i. e. every successive generation; all posterity. *Shall call me blessed* (see v. 42), i. e. shall congratulate me as the mother of the Messiah. The Romanists justify themselves from this text in their *Ave Marias* and other religious addresses to "our Lady." See Note on this passage in the Rhemish Testament, published in

49 For he that is mighty "hath done to me great things; and 'holy is his name.

50 And 'his mercy is on them

ω Ps. 71: 19; & 126: 2, 3. ω Ps. 111: 9.  
γ Ge. 17: 7; Ex. 20: 6; Ps. 108: 17, 18.

New York, 1834. The words of Mary show that she regarded the blessings of the Messiah's advent, as reaching to the end of time. This shows that under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, she was giving utterance to great spiritual truths respecting the true glory of the Messiah's reign, and that her soul was elevated far above all considerations of worldly grandeur.

49. Some may prefer to regard this verse, as containing the reason, why Mary would be the object of such general congratulation. But it seems better to take it as a second reason for the assertion, made in the former clause of v. 48. *He that is mighty*, i. e. the Almighty. *Hath done to me great things*, i. e. conferred upon me great benefits. *Great* has here the additional sense of *wonderful*, as in Ps. 71: 19; Acts 2: 11. *Holy* (i. e. revered) *is his name*. Here Mary passes to a general ascription of praise. Personal blessings are lost sight of in the divine glory and goodness, which they serve to reveal to her view.

50. Alford remarks that the verbs in vs. 50-55, although denoting past time, do not so much express the habit of the past, as the consequences involved for the future, in that which the Lord had done for Mary. *His mercy is on them*, &c. The general sentiment is that God's mercy is bestowed on such as fear him through all generations. Contrasted with this is the stern display of justice, with which he puts down the proud and rebellious (v. 51). *Them that fear him* is a circumlocution for *the pious, the righteous*. The literal rendering of *from generation to generation*, is *for generations of generations*, like our *ages of ages*, meaning *throughout all time*. In regard to vs. 49, 50, it will be seen that they contain three distinct clauses, all standing as

that fear him, from generation to generation.

51 'He hath shewed strength with his arm; 'he hath scattered

ω Ps. 98: 1; & 118: 15; Is. 40: 10; & 51: 9;  
& 52: 10. α Ps. 88: 10; 1 Pe. 5: 5.

the logical reason of what is asserted in v. 48. The first is the great things done for her by the Almighty; the second, the holiness of God; the third, his abundant mercy and grace, as shown to them that fear him. God's greatness, holiness, and mercy are advanced as the reason why Mary was to be exalted and pronounced blessed in all future time. In the English version, the full period is erroneously placed after v. 49, the comma being the punctuation mark required by the construction.

51. *He hath shewed* (or *he is wont to show*) *strength*, &c. This denotes the mighty power of God displayed in casting down the wicked, for this verse is antithetic to the preceding one, in which mercy is declared to be exercised towards the pious. The judgment of God upon the wicked, is brought out more clearly in the following clause, *he hath scattered*, &c., where the proud and haughty persecutors of God's people are especially referred to, such as Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Antiochus Epiphanes, and others, whose cruelties were a matter of historical record. God is said to scatter the proud, when he defeats their plans, and brings to naught the devices of their heart. See Job 5: 13. The figure is drawn from the scattered flight of a defeated army. *In the imagination* (i. e. disposition) *of their hearts*, denotes the seat and nature of their pride. Webster and Wilkinson take *imagination* in the sense of *intention*, and cite in illustration, the intention of the Babel-builders to make their tower a bond of union, whereas it became the source of separation and disunion.

52. *He hath put down the mighty*. This is a continuation of the same general sentiment. Bengel calls the term here employed the *prophetic preterite*, the

the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 'He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 'He hath filled the hungry

b 1 Sa. 2: 6, &c.; Job 5: 11; Ps. 113: 6.  
c 1 Sa. 2: 5; Ps. 34: 10.

event being of such certain fulfilment, that it is spoken of as having already occurred. But it is more natural to refer it to events in the past history of God's people, from which may be learnt his providential care and protection in every age. *Seats*; literally, *thrones*, persons of regal dignity being especially referred to. *Exalted them of low degree*. This is antithetic to the preceding clause. The sentiment is that in the revolutions and overturnings, by which the proud and mighty were brought low, persons of obscure condition were raised up to the occupancy of their thrones and seats of power. A notable instance of such a change of condition is furnished, in the elevation of David to the throne of Saul. See 2 Sam. 7: 8; 1 Chron. 17: 7; Ps. 78: 70; Ezek. 21: 27.

53. The same general thought is here expressed under a different imagery. The order of the parallelism is inverted, *the hungry*, corresponding to *them of low degree* in the second member of v. 52, being here placed first, while *the rich*, which answers to *the mighty*, is found in the second member. This change was often made for the sake of variety or emphasis. *He hath filled the hungry*. This is evidently to be taken in a spiritual sense. See Matt. 5: 6. Poverty and hunger are here opposed to wealth and fulness, just as dominion and power, in the preceding context, were contrasted with lowliness of birth and condition. *With good things*. A general expression embracing all sorts of food palatable and nutritious. Stripped of its imagery, it denotes all kinds of spiritual blessings, which impart sustenance to the soul. *The rich*, i. e. such as do not feel their

with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, 'in remembrance of *his* mercy;

55 'As he spake to our fathers,

d Pa. 98: 3; Je. 31: 8, 20. e Ga. 17: 19; Pa. 103: 11; Ro. 11: 28; Ga. 3: 16.

need of spiritual blessings. See 6: 24; Rev. 3: 17, 18. *He hath sent empty away*. The verb has the idea of peremptory dismissal from one's presence. These persons are supposed to stand in the divine presence to receive their allotment of blessings, but are sent away empty-handed, without any tokens of God's favor. A fine illustration of the sentiment of this verse is found in the parable of the Pharisee and Publican, the former of whom, elated with pride in view of his good works, being sent away empty; the latter, penitent and broken-hearted in view of his sins, being dismissed from the divine presence, "filled with good things."

54. The language of praise and grateful remembrance of the divine interposition in behalf of the poor and humble, now assumes a more comprehensive and general form. *Hath holpen*. An old English form for *hath helped* or *aided*. Israel had often been helped in the time of extremity, and this would be preëminently so in the Messianic times, which were now at hand. We must not confine Mary's words so strictly to the past history of God's dealings with his people, as to prohibit their application to the greater blessings which were in store for them, and the dispensation which was now to be ushered in. The low formalism and spiritual degradation of the nation, rendered the deliverance, promised under the Messiah's reign, most urgent and needful. By *Israel* we are to understand God's covenant people, but not in so restricted a sense, as to exclude those who are the spiritual descendants of Abraham (Gal. 3: 7). In Christ, according to promise, all the families of the earth were to be blessed (Gen. 12:

to Abraham, and to his seed, forever.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbors and her

3; 22: 18). *In remembrance of his mercy*, i. e. that he might show himself mindful of the mercy promised to Israel (see v. 72). This stands as the reason for the deliverance previously referred to.

55. *As he spake to our fathers* is a parenthesis, the following words to *Abraham, and to his seed forever*, belonging to the words in *remembrance of his mercy*. The parenthesis is inserted to give prominence to the idea, that God's covenant of mercy was not only made with the patriarchs, but declared to them in words of the strongest import, and confirmed by an oath. See Gen. 22: 16-18; Mich. 7: 20. The closing words *forever*, are to be joined in sense with *his seed*, being equivalent to *throughout all generations*, as Doddridge happily paraphrases it. Compare with this verse Ps. 93: 3. "This inspired composition is undoubtedly rhythmical, and admits of the ordinary arrangement of Hebrew poetry, the parallelisms being, in various portions, very regular and obvious, vs. 47, 52, 53. It is not necessary to suppose that it was uttered in the precise form in which it appears, though there is no reason to doubt that Mary herself gave it that form, as better adapted for her own remembrance, meditation, and use in future seasons of thankful adoration, especially after the birth and during the infancy of the divine Son." Webster and Wilkinson.

56. *Her own house*. If, as we suppose, the events referred to in Matt. 1: 18-24 took place after her return to Nazareth, the house here spoken of must have been her own, as she was yet unmarried.

cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that 'on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

f V. 14. g Ge. 17: 12; La. 12: 2.

57. The birth of John, which took place shortly after Mary's departure, called forth the congratulations of the neighbors and kinsfolk of Zacharias. This may account in part for the fact that Mary left before the event, wishing to avoid, as she must have done, the excitement of the occasion, and the observation of such an assemblage.

58. *Her cousins*, i. e. her kinsfolk and relations. *Showed great mercy upon her* (literally *with her*, i. e. in her case). The idea of *great* is contained in the verb, which imparts to the original greater force than is found in our common translation. *Had magnified his mercy* would have been the better rendering. *Rejoiced with her*, i. e. at her good fortune.

59. *On the eighth day* (from the birth of the child inclusive), which was the day, in the patriarchal and Mosaic law (see Gen. 17: 12; Levit. 12: 3), for the circumcision of the male offspring. On that occasion a name was given to the child, although in some instances it was named at its birth. *They came*. The subject of the verb is implied in the original, but must be understood of the relatives and friends of the family. *They called him*; literally, *they were going to call him*, such being the force of the tense in the original. *Zacharias, after, &c.* The usual habit of passing by the name of the father for that of some more remote ancestor, was departed from on this occasion, either in consequence of the singularity of the event, or, as Bengel thinks, because Zacharias had no other son.

60, 61. *His mother answered, &c.* She had doubtless been informed by Zacharias of his divinely appointed name

60 And his mother answered and said, 'Not so; but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

(see v. 18), or perhaps she herself had enjoyed a direct revelation from God (see v. 41). It is no valid objection to the former view, which Bengel makes, that if she had been informed by Zacharias, there would have been no need of appealing to him, for there was no other way in which their incredulity, as to what Elisabeth had said, would more naturally have manifested itself. *Not so*; literally, *no*, a decided negative, implying the determined zeal, with which these friends pressed the naming of the child after his father. The sad condition of Zacharias, deprived of both speech and hearing, doubtless appealed to their sympathies, and they took this method of testifying their love and respect for him, by insisting that the son of his old age should receive his name. *There is none of thy kindred, &c.* The custom of naming children after some one of their relations or progenitors, was so universal, that it was pressed by them as a valid objection to the name John, that no one of the whole relationship bore the name.

62. Surprised at the persistency of Elisabeth in adhering to this name, they determine to refer the matter to Zacharias. *They made signs*; literally, *they nodded, or winked with the eye*. The more general sense is demanded here of some sign made by the hand or head. So Bloomfield: "they intimated by becks and signs." This passage shows most clearly that Zacharias was deaf as well as dumb. Bengel, however, finds no evidence of this here, but refers it to the more natural way of communicating with a dumb man by signs than by words. *How he would have him call-*

63 And he asked for a writing-table, and wrote, saying, 'His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 'And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

A V. 12. 4 V. 12. 2 V. 20.

*ed*; more literally, *as to this (viz.), what name he wished him to be called*. They put their question in such a shape as to demand a definite reply.

63. *He asked by signs. Writing table.* The word literally signifies a *small table or tablet*. It was made of light wood, besmeared with wax or whiting, upon which they wrote with an instrument called a *style*, sharp at one end and broad and smooth at the other, so that when necessary the letters might be effaced, and the wax smoothed down. *He wrote, saying.* A Hebraism for *he wrote the words*. See 2 Kings 10: 1, 7. *His name is John, not shall be John*, as if he had not yet been named. *They marvelled all*. This confirms the view that Zacharias was deaf as well as dumb, for had he heard their previous conversation, there would have been nothing strange in this coincidence with the name given by his wife.

64. *His mouth was opened immediately.* This was in accordance with the prediction of the angel (v. 20). The word *tongue* is to be referred grammatically to the verb *was opened*. There is nothing harsh or unusual in this construction. Not to say that it was quite common with ancient writers to join in the same construction two or more words, of which but one could properly agree with the verb, in the present instance, *was opened* may be taken in the general sense *had power to articulate*, which might be referred to the tongue, the principal organ of speech, as well as to the mouth, in which the words were formed. Our translators avoided this circumlocutory signification, by supplying the verb *loosed*. *He spake*

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them : and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judea.

66 And all they that heard them, *"laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of*

*l* V. 32. *m* Ch. 2: 19, 51.

*and praised God; literally, he spake praising God.* The participle denotes the manner in which he employed the gift of speech so suddenly restored to him. He did not pause to address his friends or his wife, although he had not interchanged a word with them from the time he returned from Jerusalem (v. 23), but he immediately broke forth into praises to God, which his tongue had long been waiting to utter.

65. *Fear* refers here to religious awe. See 5: 26; 7: 16; 8: 37. The circumstances were well adapted to inspire deep reverential feelings. *All that dwelt, &c.* Reference is had to the immediate neighborhood, although the report of these strange events was doubtless spread throughout the whole hill-country, and may have found its way even to Jerusalem. *Sayings*, according to Hebrew usage, is here put for *things* so strange as to be the subject of general conversation. *Were noised abroad.* "Were everywhere talked about." Webster and Wilkinson.

66. *Heard them*, i. e. the events pertaining to the birth of John, included in the preceding narration. *Laid them up in their hearts*, i. e. pondered over them, and sought their import. *Laying* refers here especially to the silent expression of thought within, the communings with their own hearts, although it does not preclude the idea of open conversation with one another in reference to these strange events. *What manner, &c.* The literal translation is: *What then* (i. e. in view of such wondrous events) *will this child turn out to be?* What sort of a personage may we expect him to become? This was the point to which their inward musings

child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68 *"Blessed be the Lord God*

*n* Ge. 39: 2; Ps. 80: 17; & 89: 31; Ac. 11: 21. *o* Jo. 3: 23. *p* 1 Ki. 1: 45; Ps. 41: 13; & 79: 13; & 106: 43.

were directed. They did not ponder so much with idle curiosity and speculation upon the events which had taken place, as upon the future destiny of the child, whose birth had been marked with such manifest tokens of the divine favor. *The hand* (i. e. the blessing and protection) *of the Lord was with him.* This is added by the evangelist, as Olshausen remarks, by anticipation, in order to intimate that men's expectations were realized. A similar sentiment is found in Judg. 13: 25. These words preserve the narrative from a harsh break between vs. 66 and 67. Kuinoel's idea that these are the words of the wondering and reflecting people, is forced and unnatural.

67. Zacharias is now filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesies in exalted strains, blessing God for thus visiting his people with salvation. The whole song is Messianic, being referable to John only in v. 76, as the Forerunner of Christ. The structure takes the form of Hebrew poetry, and abounds in Hebrew idioms. *Prophesied*, i. e. spake under divine influence upon matters of a religious nature. It will be seen that, intermingled with praises and pious ejaculations, Zacharias uttered several predictions. Alford remarks that this hymn of thanksgiving, besides its own immediate interest to every Christian, serves to show to us the exact religious view under which John was educated by his father.

68. *God of Israel.* See N. on v. 16. *Hath visited in mercy.* That a visit of judgment is not referred to, is evident from the following verb, *hath redeemed* (literally, *hath effected redemption*. See N. on Matt. 20: 28), showing the object



of Israel; for 'he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 'And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David:

70 'As he spake by the mouth

g Ex. 3: 16; & 4: 81; Pa. 111: 9; ch. 7: 14.  
r Pa. 139: 17. s Je. 29: 5, 6; & 30: 10; Da.  
9: 24; Ac. 3: 21; Ro. 1: 2.

and design of this visitation. As Zacharias, like Mary, spake under the influence of the Spirit, we must take the redemption here spoken of, in its high evangelical sense, not however claiming thereby for Zacharias himself higher views of the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, than was entertained by other eminent saints of his time. The idea of a temporal Deliverer was prominent in their thoughts. But we cannot doubt that they were oftentimes elevated by faith to such heights of spiritual vision, as to be able to discern much of the true nature and glory of the kingdom for which they were anxiously waiting. *His people* refers primarily to the Jews, and then to all the spiritual seed of Abraham. See N. on v. 54.

69. *An horn of salvation.* As the horn was an emblem of strength and defence (see Pa. 75: 10; 89: 17; Amos 6: 13; Jer. 48: 25; Ezek. 29: 21), these words are here put for *strong* or *mighty Saviour*, the abstract for the concrete. The expression seems to have been quoted from 2 Sam. 22: 3. Some find an allusion in the word *horn* to the horns of the altar, to which criminals fled for refuge (1 Kings 1: 50; 2: 28). But such a sense would be very unsuitable here, and is not the one symbolized by horn, in its general scriptural usage. *In the house*, &c. It was from the family of David, that this powerful and promised Deliverer was to spring. See Acts 15: 16.

70. *As he spake*, &c. The burden of prophecy had been the future Messiah. Kings, prophets and holy men, had greatly desired to see his day (Matt. 13: 17; Luke 10: 24). Zacharias alludes to these predictions, as now about to have their fulfilment. Bengel says

of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

72 'To perform the mercy

s La. 26: 42; Pa. 96: 3; & 105: 8, 9; & 106: 45; Ez. 16: 60; v. 54.

that he begins where Mary left off in v. 55. *By the mouth.* "Holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. 1: 21. *Holy prophets.* There was not one of the prophets whom God made use of to reveal his ways to men, of whom the epithet *holy* might not be properly used, so far as the term is applicable to frail and erring man. Balaam against his will was forced to bless Israel (Numb. 23: 8-10, 19-24; 24: 3-9), and utter a remarkable Messianic prediction (Numb. 24: 17); but not being voluntary in the act, and besides being a very bad man (2 Pet. 2: 15, 16), he has no claim whatever to be numbered among the holy prophets of the Lord. *Which have been*, &c. The whole line and succession of prophets is here referred to. The prophetic eye of all these holy men was directed to the times of the Messiah. *Since the world began* is equivalent to *from the most ancient times*, which some refer to the prophetic promise made to Abraham (Gen. 12: 3; 22: 18), and renewed to Isaac (Gen. 26: 4), and to Jacob (Gen. 28: 14). It is better, however, to refer it to the first great Messianic prediction made in Eden (Gen. 3: 15), the fountain-head of the stream of prophecy, which flowed down the ages, in an ever widening and deepening channel.

71. *That we should be saved*, &c. Literally, (and he hath raised up) *salvation* (i. e. the means of salvation) *from our enemies*, the construction being continued from v. 69, the intermediate verse being parenthetical. *Enemies*, not political but spiritual. Here was the great error of the Jewish people in relation to the Messiah. They regarded his mission as political and not spirit-

*promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant ;*

73 \* The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out

u Ge. 12: 8; & 17: 4; & 22: 16, 17; He. 6: 13, 17.

ual. Such, however, was not the meaning of Zacharias, speaking as he did under the influence of the Holy Ghost. *And from the hand, &c.* A continuation of the preceding sentiment, according to the laws of poetic parallelism.

72, 73. *To perform the mercy, &c.* This is to be referred in construction to v. 69, showing the object or purpose of God in raising up this mighty Deliverer. The word *promised* in our common version is unnecessarily supplied, the phrase, *to perform mercy to* (i. e. towards or in behalf of) *our fathers*, being the same as to *show mercy, &c.* The next clause, according to the structure of Hebrew poetry, carries out the same general sentiment, the verb *to remember* including also the sense of fulfilling or executing. *His holy covenant* is explained in the following verse, which is put with it in explanatory apposition. *The oath* (i. e. even the oath) is grammatically dependent on the verb *to remember*, although in the original it is put in the same case as the relative *which*. This is not an unmeaning construction, but serves to connect *oath* more emphatically and indissolubly with the relative clause, in the sense of *the very oath which he sware, &c.* This was the ground and foundation of all the promises made by God to his chosen people, and deserved a distinct and emphatic reference in this song of praise.

74. *That he would grant, &c.* The verb is grammatically connected with *to perform*, the structure of the original, which cannot be well transferred into English without circumlocution, denoting in what the action of that verb consisted: *to perform mercy in the granting unto us, &c.* If this view

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of the hand of our enemies, might \*serve him without fear,

75 \* In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

76 And thou, child, shalt be

u Ro. 6: 18, 22; He. 9: 14. y Ja. 32: 39, 40; Ep. 4: 24; 2 Th. 2: 13; 2 Ti. 1: 9; Tit. 2: 12; 1 Pe. 1: 15; 2 Pe. 1: 4.

seems inadmissible to any, I would suggest the connection of it with v. 71, as showing that not only deliverance from their enemies was now to be effected, but that the true service and fear of God would also result from the advent of the Messiah. Some expositors give to this clause the idea of purpose. Others think that it serves to denote the tenor or purport of the oath made to Abraham. This seems to have been the view of the translators in our common version. *Him*, the Lord God of Israel. *Being delivered out of the hand*; literally, *being drawn out of the hand* (i. e. power of). The idea is one of extrication from the midst of peril and trouble. *Without fear* or molestation in the exercise of religious duties. Alford refers to the prohibition of the Jewish worship by Antiochus Epiphanes, and by the Romans, as being most calamitous to the people.

75. *In holiness and righteousness.* These words have here no great difference in signification, but are employed to give fulness to the expression. The former refers more especially to conformity with the divine law, the latter to the fulfilment of human laws and duties. These words show, beyond all question, that Zacharias in v. 74 referred to deliverance from sin, or, as Webster and Wilkinson interpret it, *justification* from sin. The result was to be a state of holiness or sanctification, in which God's people would continue to the end of life. The words *of life* are generally regarded as spurious, the genuine text being *all our days*, which denotes simply the idea of perpetuity.

76. Zacharias now pauses in his glowing rehearsal of the benefits to accrue from the reign of Messiah, and ad-

called the prophet of the Highest, for 'thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways ;

77 To give knowledge of salva-

• Isa. 40 : 3 ; Mal. 3 : 1 ; & 4 : 5 ; Mat. 11 : 10 ; v. 17.

dresses the child in language of great beauty and spiritual richness. Instead however of dwelling on his future gifts and eminent success as a reformer, he thinks of him only as the prophet and forerunner of this Personage, of whose glorious mission he has just been speaking. A clear spiritual view of Christ causes all things else to sink into comparative insignificance. *Shalt be called.* See N. on v. 32. *The prophet of the Highest.* Olshausen contrasts this with *Son of the Highest* in v. 32. The word *prophet* is often used in the New Testament, of religious teachers, or such as make known to men the ways of God. *For thou shalt go before* (see v. 17), &c. denotes the reason why John was to be called the prophet of the Highest. He was to precede and prepare the way for the son of the Highest (v. 32).

77. *To give knowledge of salvation*, i. e. to teach the people the true method of salvation through repentance and reformation of life (see Matt. 3 : 2), which alone would secure *the remission of their sins*. This was the essential and crowning feature of the Messianic dispensation. Salvation was made accessible through faith and repentance, not by the observance of legal forms and ceremonies, as under the Mosaic dispensation. Some expositors construct *by* or *in the remission of their sins* with *salvation*, as denoting its only and true ground. But *salvation* is not so much the subject of thought here, as the knowledge of the way of salvation through the remission of sin.

78. The salvation here referred to was to be wholly gratuitous. It was tendered to the race *through the tender mercy of God*, without any goodness either existing or foreseen in those to whom it was offered. Such clear and comprehensive views of the scheme of salvation, show that Zacharias was in-

tion unto his people, \*by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God ; whereby the day-

• Ma. 1 : 4 ; ch. 3 : 2.

spired of the Holy Ghost. It is doubtful whether the most pious and enlightened of the Jews, had ever fully attained to this idea of gratuitous justification from sin through the promised Messiah, unless, like Zacharias, they were specially instructed by divine illumination. Bengel constructs *through the tender mercy of our God*, with *remission* instead of *salvation*. This does not affect, however, the general sense, since *remission of sin* is included in *salvation*, the knowledge of which was to be first made known by John. The word rendered *tender mercy* literally signifies *the inwards, bowels*, which were supposed by the ancients to be the seat of compassion, mercy, and love. It is a word of strong import, as when we speak of one's bowels yearning over a beloved son. *Whereby* refers to the tender mercy of God, and introduces the result of this merciful and gracious provision. *Dayspring* ; literally, *the rising*, as of a heavenly body, and hence figuratively, the *dayspring or dawn* applied to the Messiah, who was to be the Light of the world. See Isa. 9 : 2 ; 49 : 6 ; 60 : 1-3. That it is not here to be referred to John the Baptist, is evident from the following context. The words *from on high* are very significant. The heavenly bodies rise from the depths of the horizon, but this spiritual *dayspring* is revealed *from on high*, as it were from a distant and glorious system, and descending to our view from the very zenith of the heavens. Compare 24 : 49, where the same expression *from on high*, is employed of the descent and outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. So also to *on high* (Eph. 4 : 8) quoted from Ps. 68 : 19. The LXX. translate the Hebrew of Ps. 18 : 17 ; 144 : 7, by the same Greek words here rendered *from on high*, all which show conclusively that, stripped of its high

spring from on high hath visited us,

79 <sup>5</sup> To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And <sup>6</sup> the child grew, and  
b Isa. 9: 2; & 49: 7; & 49: 9; Mat. 4: 16; Ac.  
26: 18. c Ch. 2: 40.

poetic imagery, its true signification is *from heaven or from God*. The construction of the words *from on high* with the verb *to give light*, does not change the sense or remove the difficulty alluded to, for how can a heavenly body shine *from on high*, unless its own position be in mid heaven; and if so, how can it be strictly a rising luminary? The phrase *hath visited us* conforms to the personage represented by the *dayspring*. Had the figurative language been kept up, it would have been *hath risen upon or appeared to us*. On the use of the word *hath visited*, see N. on v. 68.

79. The reason for the appearance of this heavenly luminary is given in this verse. *To give light*, i. e. to illuminate. This shows that the word rendered *dayspring*, is not to be translated, as some critics suggest, *shoot or budding branch*, which would give a very harsh and mixed metaphor. *To them that sit*, &c. See Isa. 9: 1; Matt. 4: 16. Darkness and death are often found united, as are also their opposites, light and life. *To guide our feet* belongs to the words *to give light*, as the result or consequence of this divine illumination. *In the way*; more literally, *into the way*. This implies that men through disobedience to the divine law are estranged from the path of peace and safety, and it was to bring back their footsteps to the way of life, that Jesus the Guide and Illuminator came into this world of sin and death. *Way of peace* is a figurative expression, denoting that walk of life and general conduct, which secures inward peace and ultimate salvation. These words close the hymn or ascription of praise, which was uttered by Zacharias on this occasion. How

waxed strong in spirit, and <sup>7</sup> was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

## CHAPTER II.

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a

d Mat. 3: 1; & 11: 7.

far his own mind was enlightened to discern the full import of these words prompted of the Spirit, we do not know. We may hope, however, that, like Simeon and Anna, and others who were waiting for the redemption of Israel, he had views far in advance of his countrymen, respecting the true nature of the Messiah's reign, although imperfect in comparison with those which we have gained through the Gospel of Christ.

80. Compare with this statement of the early character and spiritual training of John, vs. 40, 52 of the next chapter, which speaks of the early childhood of Jesus. *In spirit*, i. e. in mental and spiritual attainments, as opposed to physical growth, referred to in the preceding verb. *In the deserts*. He spent much time in solitary retirement, and no place was more suitable for this than the desert, which was near at hand. These seasons of retirement are to be dated from the time, when his body had become capable of the endurance of abstemious habits. *Until the day*, &c. This was the time referred to in Matt. 3: 1; Luke 3: 2. *His shewing* refers to his public ministrations, when he assumed the character of a public teacher.

## CHAPTER H.

1-7. THE BIRTH OF JESUS. *Bethlehem*. This portion of Luke is to be read after Matt. 1: 18-25.

1. *In those days*, i. e. in the times referred to in the preceding chapter, exclusive of the last verse, which pertains to the history of John's childhood, youth, and training for his office of reformer. *Went out*, i. e. was issued or promulgated. *A decree*. An edict or ordinance. *Cesar Augustus*. This was

decree from Cesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

2 (*And this taxing was first*

a Ac. 5: 37.

Octavianus, the nephew of Julius Cesar, upon whom, on his accession to power, had been conferred by the Roman senate the surname Augustus. He died A. D. 14, at the age of seventy-six. The title *Cesar* was assumed by him and by his successors, until Domitian, who was the last emperor to whose name it was attached. *All the world*. Some refer this to the whole Roman empire, but as no historian speaks, in definite and certain terms, of a census or enrollment of the whole empire at this time, I accord with the most judicious commentators, in referring it to the land of Judea. If a general census had been intended, it is rather strange that Luke should have identified it to Theophilus, by saying that it took place in the time when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, an event of no great importance to a citizen of Rome, or even of Greece, or proconsular Asia. That the phrase *the whole world* (literally, *the inhabited world*), is sometimes used of Judea only, appears clearly from Acts 11: 28, if not from Luke 4: 5. There is no grammatical difficulty in the way of its restricted use, as the whole is often put by synecdoche for the part. If, however, the passage cited from Suidas by Greswell, be referred not to the city of Rome only, but to the whole empire, then we shall be obliged to take this expression in its more usual and enlarged sense. It will probably be never satisfactorily determined, whether this was a general enrollment of the whole empire, or confined to the land of Judea. *Should be taxed*, i. e. enrolled. A census or enrollment of this sort, sometimes embraced only the person, and at other times both person and property. Robinson refers this to only an enumeration of persons.

2. *This taxing* (i. e. enrollment) *was first made*, &c. A difficulty arises here in harmonizing the birth of Jesus

made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

Christ, which was at least eight or ten years before Quirinus or Cyrenius was governor of Syria, with what is here stated, that this enrollment took place in the time of this governor. Without entering into a long discussion of this subject, which the brevity of these Notes will not allow, it will suffice to mention the two methods of solution which seem the best founded. The one is to take the word rendered *first* in the sense of *before*, and then to translate, *this enrollment took place before* (that better known one when) *Cyrenius was governor of Syria*. But this seems forced and unnatural, and demands too much of the parenthesis. The second solution, therefore, seems preferable, which supposes some event actually referred to, by which the time of Christ's birth might be specifically and unmistakably designated, and seeks an explanation which does not run counter to this fact. Those who start with this view, explain the difficulty by supposing that Cyrenius was associated, at this time, as governor with Sentius Saturninus, under whose presidency of Syria our Saviour was born. This agrees well with the form of expression in Luke, and requires no parenthetical explanation, as does the former mode of solution, to fill out the sense. It may be remarked here, that Judea belonged to the presidency of Syria.

3. *All the inhabitants of Judea*. *Every one into his own city*. In the carrying out of the edict, the Jews were left to their own peculiar customs and usages. As Joseph belonged to the family of David of the tribe of Judah, his city was Bethlehem, to which, we are told here, he went up for the purpose of being enrolled. Probably the only reason for this reference to the decree of Augustus, was to show how it was that Joseph, living in Galilee, should have been with his wife, at the time of her delivery, in Bethlehem.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David,)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

b 1 Sa. 16: 1, 4; John 7: 42.

c Mat. 1: 16; ch. 1: 27.

4. *Went up*, as from an inferior province or city, to one greater or of more political importance. *Nazareth*. See N. on Matt. 2: 23. *Bethlehem*. See N. on Matt. 2: 1. *House and lineage*. These words refer properly, the former, to the *household*, the latter, to the *family* in a more general sense. Hardly is any distinction, however, to be sought for here, the words being designed to give full and emphatic expression to Joseph's real descent from David. There is no occasion for employing the sign of parenthesis in this verse, the clause denoting the reason why Joseph went up to Bethlehem.

5. *To be taxed*; literally, *to enroll himself*, i. e. to give in his name for enrollment. *With Mary, &c.* These words are not to be joined in sense with *to be taxed*, but simply denote accompaniment. Some think that Mary went up with Joseph because she was an heiress, otherwise women were not registered. But this was a mere enrollment, having relation to the males only, and it is not at all likely, in view of what is related in v. 7, and from other circumstances, that Mary had an inheritance. A reason why she accompanied her husband is to be found rather in her condition, which would not justify his leaving her behind. What is said about her being his *espoused wife*, does not militate against Matt. 1: 25, but refers rather to the fact, that they did not enter upon the full relations and duties of man and wife, until after the birth of Jesus.

6. *While they were there*, i. e. in Bethlehem. How long they had been

6 And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

d Mat. 1: 18; ch. 1: 27.

e Mat. 1: 25.

there before Mary's delivery, we are not informed; but from the circumstance that they had yet found no room in the inn, but were occupying a temporary lodging-place, we may conjecture that a short time only elapsed between their arrival and the event above alluded to. We see from this brief recital, how Mary, by the providence of God, was led to Bethlehem, so that in accordance with prophecy the Messiah might be born there. Bengel thinks it doubtful whether Mary was herself acquainted with the prophecy relating to the birth-place of the Messiah.

7. *First-born son*. See N. on Matt. 1: 25. *In a manger*. This implies very clearly that their lodging-place was a stable or outhouse, where animals were housed and fed. Bloomfield maintains that the word translated *manger*, was not a crib where animals were fed, but a covered hovel or shed, open on one side, like those found around our farm-yards, which, in a climate like that of Judea, would be no bad shelter for the houseless. But I see no good reason for referring it to other than a manger or feeding-trough. Webster and Wilkinson say that "the *khan* or inn was built in the form of a quadrangle with an open court, where travellers could stop without payment. At the back of the apartments were stables. The *phatne* (or *manger*) was the bench, towards which the horses' heads were tied, on which their food could rest." In the crowded state of the inn, it would be very natural for those whose means were too slender to permit their obtaining a better resting-place, to find

**8** And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

a temporary lodgment in the stables and outhouses. In one of these were Joseph and Mary at the time of her delivery, and for want of a better place, the new-born infant was laid in one of the troughs out of which the horses were accustomed to feed. This is the simple and natural sense lying upon the face of the passage. No credit is to be attached to the tradition mentioned by Justin Martyr and others, and adopted by Olshausen, that our Lord was born in a cave. *Because there was no room, &c.* This was occasioned by the numbers who had come to Bethlehem from different parts of the land to be enrolled. Bengel quaintly remarks, that now also a place for Christ in inns is rarely found.

**8-20. AN ANGEL APPEARS UNTO THE SHEPHERDS. Near Bethlehem.**

**8.** *In the same country, i. e. in the region near Bethlehem. Abiding in the open field,* whether in tents or in the open air is uncertain. The word rendered *abiding*, seems to refer to a lodging-place, and we can hardly avoid the conclusion, that near by the fold, were temporary tents for the convenience of the shepherds, whose duty it was to keep this nightly watch over their flocks. Exposure to the night-air, however, in that bland climate, was attended with no danger or inconvenience, and we may suppose, therefore, that a large portion of their hours of watchful duty was passed in the open air, gazing at and admiring those starry heavens, which had inspired David in a former age with such exalted views of the Deity, and corresponding self-abasement. It may have been upon these same plains that the royal Psalmist, when a shepherd-boy, had taken charge of his father's flock, and penned the twenty-third psalm, and other pastoral and devotional lyrics.

As it regards the time of the year when our Lord was born, Greswell, whom Alford follows, makes it highly probable that it was on the Jewish even-

ing of the fifth of April, the tenth of the Jewish Nisan, on which day of April, and the fourteenth of Nisan, he suffered 33 years after. At this time there would be abundance of pasturage in the fields. Dr. Robinson, on the supposition that John entered upon his public ministry in the spring, and that Jesus came to his baptism six months later, at which time he was declared to be about 30 years of age (see 3:23), comes to the conclusion that John's birth was in the spring, and that of our Lord in the autumn. Lardner places the event between the middle of August and the middle of November. Archbishop Newcome, referring to this, takes the mean time, Oct. 1. Webster and Wilkinson think that our Lord was born not later in the year than September. The sixth of January was celebrated in the Eastern churches in the third and fourth centuries, as the festival of the birth and baptism of Jesus, while, according to Clemens Alexandrinus, the Alexandrian church assigned it to the 20th of May. The Western churches, on the presumption that the angel appeared to Zacharias on the day of expiation (Sept. 25), when the high-priest burned incense, fixed upon the 25th of December as the day of our Saviour's birth. To what can such widely conflicting views be attributed? Most manifestly to the absence of all certain evidence, as to the precise time of our Lord's birth. Revelation is silent on this point. The tradition of the church is widely diverse and discrepant. There are no data upon which any calculations may be based, and hence every thing rests on mere conjecture. *Keeping watch over; literally, keeping the watches of the night* (i. e. the night-watches) *over their flocks.* They took the service by turns. The sheep were not confined under a covered fold by night, it being regarded more conducive to the excellence of the wool, to let them remain under the open sky, by night as well as by day. Hence continued care and watchfulness

9 And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I

ſ Ch. 1: 12.

would be required against their exposure to robbers or wild beasts, or straying away, and they were numbered at evening, and sometimes in the morning. See Gen. 24: 2; Jer. 33: 13. The preposition rendered *over*, is here, by its construction, expressive of earnest and watchful care on the part of the shepherds for their flock.

9. *Came upon them*, i. e. appeared suddenly to them. Compare 24: 4; Acts 23: 11. *Glory of the Lord*. This is explained by some as merely a supernatural brightness, such as indicated the presence of a superior intelligence. Olshausen refers it to the radiant light, which is imagined as floating around all heavenly appearances. It is far better, however, to refer it to the splendor with which Jehovah is invested, called the Shechinah, and which, on this extraordinary occasion, attended the appearance of the angel to these shepherds. Bengel, who is fruitful in analogies, comparisons, and resemblances, remarks upon this angelic visit, that in every humiliation of Christ, provision is made to render what is due to his divine glory. In this place, it is done by the heralding of an angel; in his circumcision, by his name *Jesus*; in his purification, by the testimony of Simon; in his baptism, by the demurring of John (see Matt. 3: 14); in his passion, by various supernatural manifestations. *Shone round about them*. They were surrounded with its effulgence. *They were sore afraid*. See N. on Mark 4: 41. Similar to this was the fear with which the disciples beheld the bright cloud which overshadowed Jesus and his heavenly visitors on the Mount of Transfiguration. See Matt. 17: 6.

bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

g Ge. 12: 3; Mat. 23: 19; Ma. 1: 15; va. 81, 82; ch. 24: 47; Col. 1: 23. h Is. 9: 6. i Mat. 1: 21. k Mat. 1: 16; & 16: 16; ch. 1: 43; Ac. 2: 36; & 10: 36; Phil. 2: 11.

10. *I bring you*; more literally, *I announce to you*. The word *joy* is here to be taken for the cause of joy, the sentiment being: I announce to you glad tidings, which will be to you the occasion of great joy. *Which (joy) shall be to all people*; literally, *to all the people*, reference being had primarily to the Jews, to whom the gospel was first preached. No such limitation is however found in the general ascription of praise in v. 14, where *good will* is proclaimed to all men.

11. *For unto you, &c.* This denotes the ground of the preceding joyous announcement. *Unto you*, i. e. for your benefit. The pronoun refers primarily to the shepherds, but includes also the whole human family, to whom the advent of Jesus was an occasion of great joy. *In the city* is to be constructed with *is born*, the place as well as time being distinctly referred to. *City of David* (i. e. Bethlehem) was a Messianic expression, as the promised Deliverer was to be born in that town. See Micah 5: 2; Matt. 2: 5, 6. *A Saviour*. The time and place in which these words were spoken forbid the low and frigid sense, which some in these days would affix to them. Nothing short of the idea of a great Deliverer from the curse and condemnation of a violated law, meets the full demand of the passage. *Which is Christ the Lord*. The Saviour thus gloriously revealed is declared to be Christ the Lord, words which in their connection are indicative of great power and glory. Alford avers that he sees no way of understanding this word *Lord*, but as corresponding to the Hebrew Jehovah. The name Jesus is here omitted, because it was not given him in the usual form,



12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.

13 'And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the

*1* Ga. 28: 12; *2* 23: 1, 2; Ps. 103: 20, 21; *3* 148: 2; Da. 7: 10; He. 1: 14; Re. 5: 11.

• until the time of his circumcision (v. 21).

12. A *sign* (literally, *the sign*) or token of the truth of the angelic message. No miraculous sign is here referred to, although, as Olshausen remarks, some stress is to be laid on the words, *ye shall find*, to which the words *they found* in v. 16, seem to correspond. This same expositor thinks that they were guided by a secret spiritual influence to the right place, through the darkness of the night. It must be borne in mind, that the designation of the city of David, which they knew to be Bethlehem, as the place of the child's birth, gave them the general direction which they were to take. *The babe*. The absence of the article in the original, requires the translation *a babe*. The child when found was to be identified by the swaddling-clothes in which it was wrapped, and the manger in which it was laid. The very annunciation was a trial of their faith, for it conflicted with all their preconceived notions, that the Messiah should make his first appearance as a new-born and helpless infant in such lowly condition.

13. No sooner had the angel uttered this wonderful message, than he was joined by a heavenly company, who united in one of the grandest and most remarkable anthems of praise to God, which human ears ever heard. *Suddenly there was, &c.* They may have been present, although unseen to mortal vision, when the angel first appeared; or, as Olshausen thinks, the angel may have been suddenly joined by this heavenly band. Whichever of these views is taken, their presence was both sudden and unexpected to the shep-

herds. *Heavenly host* praising God, and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth 'peace, 'good will toward men.

*m* Ch. 19: 38; Ep. 1: 6; *2* 10, 21; Re. 5: 13. *n* Isa. 57: 19; ch. 1: 79; Ro. 5: 1; Ep. 3: 17; Col. 1: 20. *o* Jn. 3: 16; Ep. 3: 4, 7; 3 Th. 2: 16; 1 Jo. 4: 9, 10.

herds. *Heavenly host*; literally, *heavenly army*. The angels are frequently represented as an army. Dan. 4: 35; Rev. 19: 14; Ps. 103: 21; 148: 2. So we frequently find the expression *Jehorah of hosts*. See Isa. 13: 4; 22: 14; Mal. 1: 14. Bengel remarks that here was an occasion, in which an *army* announced and praised peace. *Saying, &c.* The following words were uttered in song, whether in notes of unison, or in harmonic combination, is of course unknown to us. From what we know of Hebrew music and the structure of Hebrew poetry, we may conjecture the song to have been in unison and in responsive strains. The heavenly host had shouted for joy at the creation (Job 38: 7), and had ministered at the giving of the law (Deut. 33: 2; Acts 7: 58; Gal. 3: 19), but never had they a more pleasing task to perform, than in shouting forth God's praises at the incarnation of his Son.

14. Webster and Wilkinson say that this verse is as much a proclamation as a doxology. "The heavenly host take up the announcement of the angel (vs. 10, 11), repeating it in substance, and confirming and stating it more distinctly as a message of glad tidings." *Glory to God*. Some critics supply *is*, others translate *let there be glory*, which is preferable. Alford includes both senses, *there is and let there be glory*. The phrase *in the highest*, is to be taken in the sense of *highest heavens*, where is the seat of God, and where dwell the most holy and exalted intelligences in the universe of being. See N. on Matt. 6: 9; 21: 9. *On earth* is antithetic to the phrase *highest heavens*. The word *peace* corresponds to *glory* in the first member, and includes happiness in its

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing

which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

most enlarged and general sense. This use of the word, not in its restricted sense as opposed to war, but in a general sense as denoting every kind of good, is quite common in the New Testament. See N. on Matt. 10:18. *Good will* (on the part of God) to men; literally, *among men*, the idea being one of universal participation and enjoyment. This clause illustrates and explains the preceding one, showing the divine and heavenly nature of the peace there referred to. In the ascriptions of praise, uttered by the multitude, when our Lord made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the words *peace in heaven and glory in the highest*, are substituted for the form here used by the angels. This was natural and appropriate. The angels were rejoicing and praising God for his beneficence and love to men. They had come down to earth as the bearers of glad tidings. The effect of the Messiah's advent in promoting peace and happiness on earth, was prominent in their mind. But not so the multitude, who preceded and followed our Lord, as he descended the Mount of Olives to enter Jerusalem. Their thoughts were upon God, the bountiful Giver of these blessings, and they praised him for the *peace in heaven* or heavenly peace, which had been bestowed by him upon men. The angels praised God for the happiness which would result to men from the gift of his love. The multitude adored him as the source of the great blessings to result from the Messiah's reign.

15. As soon as they had closed their anthem of praise, the angels disappeared from mortal view. The shepherds resolve to repair immediately to Bethlehem, to learn the truth of what had been so strangely made known to them. *The shepherds*; literally, *and the shepherds*. The conjunction so con-

nects the action of the shepherds with that of the angels, as to denote immediate sequence; *when the angels were gone away—the shepherds also said, &c.* The latter followed so closely upon the former, that the departure of the celestial visitants, and their mutual exhortation to leave at once for Bethlehem, are represented as taking place well-nigh at the same time. In the original it is *the men* (viz.) *the shepherds*, the fulness of expression being designed to make emphatic the distinction between the angels and the shepherds, and perhaps to designate that the shepherds stood as the representatives of men in their reception of these glad tidings. *Let us now go*. The original is full of life and energy: *Come, let us at once go unto Bethlehem*; literally, *even unto Bethlehem*, the idea being expressive of a determination on their part to go to the very place designated by the angel, in order to make themselves fully acquainted with the thing spoken of. It would seem, from the form of expression here made use of, that Bethlehem was not the place of their residence. See also v. 20. *See this thing*, i. e. attain full and accurate knowledge respecting it. This was no manifestation of unbelief in the angelic message, but a natural desire to learn something further respecting it. They were also virtually directed by the angel (v. 12), to confirm their faith by an actual visit to the place where the child had been born. *Thing*; literally, *word*, i. e. the thing spoken of. *Which is come to pass*, i. e. which has taken place. *Hath made known* by the ministry of the angel.

16. *With haste* (See N. on v. 15). This shows the alacrity with which they obeyed the angelic direction, and their unshaken confidence in what had been told them. *And found*, as it had been announced to them. *A manger*—literally,

17 And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard *it*, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 'But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

p Ge. 37: 11; ch. 1: 66; v. 51.

*the manger*, i. e. the one spoken of in v. 12.

17. *Had seen it*; literally, *had seen*. The pronoun *it*, supplied in our version, is too restrictive. Reference is had to all the circumstances connected with the child, spoken of in v. 12. *Made known abroad*, even before their departure (v. 20). This report was probably confined to those pious persons, who, like Simeon and Anna, were waiting for the consolation of Israel. *The saying*, i. e. the thing spoken of, the matter or affair (see v. 15), *which was told them* by the angel.

17. *Wondered at*, &c. The construction of the original gives this shade of sense: *they conversed with amazement concerning those things*, &c. We are not told how many, if any of them, visited Mary, and obtained personal information respecting the child. The lowliness of our Lord's birth, doubtless from the very outset, caused many to hesitate in acknowledging him as the promised Messiah. Their wonder and curiosity were, however, strongly excited by what had been told them respecting him.

19. *But Mary*, &c. The antithesis indicates that Mary regarded these things in a far different light from what they did, to whom the shepherds had reported the news. They were filled with wonder, but she made these events the subject of continued reflection. Her faith was doubtless confirmed by the report of the shepherds, in regard to the angelic visit and song. *Kept*; literally, *noted or watched closely*. *And pondered*; literally, *pondering*, the parti-

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

21 'And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called 'JESUS, which was so named of

q Ge. 17: 12; Le. 12: 8; ch. 1: 59.

r Mat. 1: 21, 23; ch. 1: 31.

ciple denoting the manner in which Mary kept these things in her heart. It seems to imply that the persons referred to in the preceding verse, soon forgot, partially at least, what had been told them, while Mary kept them in active remembrance.

20. *Returned* to the place where they were keeping their flocks. *Glorifying and praising God*. The words of the angel had been fully verified, and now with faith confirmed and hopes strengthened in the glorious fulfilment of the predictions concerning the Messiah, they return to their occupation. *Heard and seen* at Bethlehem. They had doubtless been informed by Joseph and Mary of these events, related in 1: 26-38; Matt. 1: 18-25. The words and song of the angelic host, too, were not forgotten by them, and as they reflected and conversed upon the subject, they could not refrain from open ascriptions of praise to God, for having thus remembered his people. The clause, *as it was told unto them*, refers to all which they had learned from the angel, and subsequently from Joseph and Mary.

21-38. THE CIRCUMCISION OF JESUS AND HIS PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE. Bethlehem. Jerusalem.

21. *When eight days were accomplished*, i. e. when the child was eight days old. These days are represented as being preparatory to the circumcision of the child. *His name was called Jesus*. See 1: 31; Matt. 1: 21. The construction of the original is such, that the naming of Jesus is made the principal subject, the rite of circum-

the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

22 And when 'the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every male that

• Le. 12: 2, 3, 4, 6. † Ex. 18: 2; & 23: 29; & 34: 19; Nu. 8: 18; & 8: 17; & 18: 15.

cision being alluded to, merely to denote the time and occasion of the bestowal of the name. *His name*; in the original, *then his name*, responding to *when the days*, in the subordinate member. *Which was so named*; literally, *the name given him, or by which he was called. Of the angel.* See 1: 31; Matt. 1: 21.

22. *The days of her purification.* The plural pronoun is found in some of the best MSS., which would include the child Jesus in the rite of purification. There need be no hesitation in adopting this as the true reading; for the purification was legal and not moral, and it behooved our Lord to be made like unto his brethren (Heb. 2: 17), and subject to all the requirements of the law (Gal. 4: 4). *According unto the law of Moses.* See Levit. 12: 1-8. *Were accomplished*, i. e. were fully completed. The time for a son was forty days from his birth, or thirty-three days after his circumcision, and twice that period for a daughter. *They brought him to Jerusalem.* Up to this time they had remained at Bethlehem, and thither also they returned after the presentation in the temple. The original is such that these words may be taken with *according to the law of Moses*, or with the following words, *to present him to the Lord*. It belongs in sense to both clauses.

23. From the day when the first-born of Egypt had been smitten by the destroying angel, the first-born of Israel were consecrated to the Lord. See Numb. 8: 13. But God ordained and accepted, as a substitute for the first-

openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to "that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man

• Le. 12: 2, 3, 4.

born, the tribe of Levi, which was set apart for his special service (Numb. 3: 12). But as the number of the first-born exceeded that of the tribe, a redemption price of five shekels was to be paid to the priests (Numb. 3: 46, 47), which (Numb. 18: 15, 16) was ordained to be paid for all the first-born. *Every male that openeth*, &c. i. e. every first-born. *Shall be called.* See N. on 1: 32. *Holy*, i. e. consecrated or separated to the service of the Lord. This refers to the original arrangement, which, as above stated, was commuted for the personal service of the tribe of Levi. *To the Lord*, i. e. to the service of Jehovah.

24. This verse is to be joined in construction with v. 22, the intervening one being parenthetic. *To offer a sacrifice*, &c. The prescribed sacrifice was a yearling lamb for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon or turtle-dove for a sin-offering; but, in case that the poverty of the mother forbade the offering of a lamb, two turtle-doves or young pigeons were permitted as a substitute. The one of these was for a burnt-offering, the other for a sin-offering. See Levit. 12: 6-8. It shows Mary's poverty, and forbids the idea hinted at in the note on 2: 5, of her being an heiress, that she was obliged to avail herself of this beneficent provision.

25. *There was a man*, &c. Some have conjectured that Simeon was the celebrated Rabbi of that name, and the father of Gamaliel. Olshausen thinks that this is extremely improbable, as the expression, *there was a man*, indi-

was just and devout, "waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not "see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

as Is. 40: 1; Ma. 15: 48; v. 38.  
y Ps. 89: 48; He. 11: 5.

cates that he belonged to the lower ranks of society. However the fact may be, in regard to the conjecture above stated, Olshausen's objection is of little force, for Gamaliel himself is referred to by the general expression, *one—a Pharisee*, in Acts 5: 34. It was not the design of Luke to refer to the worldly standing of Simeon, but only his eminent religious attainments. *Just and devout*. A similar distinction exists here as in the words *holiness and righteousness* (1: 75). *Waiting for with earnest longing and expectation. Consolation of Israel*. A Messianic expression, as Christ was to bring consolation and succor to his people. The word may here be taken in the sense of *Consoler*, the abstract for the concrete. See N. on 1: 69. *The Holy Ghost was upon him*, either habitually dwelling in him, or coming upon him, as upon them in whom dwelt the Spirit of prophecy. Alford refers it to the higher form of spiritual life, expressed in the earliest times by *walking with God*. But this is implied in the interpretation, which refers it to the Spirit of prophecy vouchsafed to him at times, and showing him to have been a devoted and consistent servant of the Lord.

26. *It was revealed unto him*. In what manner we are not informed. From the way in which the divine intimations were made to Joseph and to the wise men (Matt. 1: 20; 2: 12, 13, 19), some have inferred that the revelation to Simeon was made in a dream. But the distinct reference made twice to the Holy Ghost, would lead us to suppose that it was made to him in a vision, while in a state of prophetic

27 And he came 'by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

s Mat. 4: 1.

ecstasy. *That he should not see death*. In Matt. 16: 28, we have the varied expression, *shall not taste of death*. Taste and sight are often put metaphorically for the actual experience of a thing. *The Lord's Christ*, i. e. the Christ, the Anointed of the Lord. See Ps. 2: 2. Between the words *see death* and *see the Lord's Christ*, there is a beautiful and striking antithesis.

27. *By the Spirit*, i. e. under the influence of the Spirit. The article in the original refers the word *Spirit*, to the Holy Ghost spoken of in the preceding verse. *Into the temple*, i. e. into the court of the women. *Brought in* for the ceremony of presentation. See v. 22. *To do for him, &c.* Reference is had to the payment of the redemption price, viz. the turtle-doves or young pigeons (v. 24). *Custom*, i. e. rite or commandment.

28. *Then took he him up, &c.* He required no information in regard to the incidents attending the conception and birth of the child. It had been revealed to him, that before his death, he should see the long expected Messiah. Impelled by the Spirit's influence, he had gone up to the temple, and when Mary entered, he was divinely enabled to recognize her child as the promised One. The Greek pronoun gives this shade of thought: *then took he* (of his own accord) *him up*. It was a self-prompted act, wholly apart from any suggestion or direction of his attention to the child, which might have been made by the parents. *And blessed God*. His first act was one of adoration and thanksgiving. Then, as his aged eyes had been permitted to rest on Him so long expected, he prays for a speedy

29 Lord, 'now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes 'have seen thy salvation,

a Ge. 46: 30; Phl. 1: 23.

b La. 52: 10; ch. 8: 6.

and peaceful departure from the toils and sorrows of life.

29. *Now lettest thou thy servant depart*; literally, *now thou art releasing thy servant* from life. Simeon regarded the sight of the promised Messiah, as the consummation of his earthly service, and hence it was to him an assurance that his earthly labors were now about to end. The passage shows conclusively, that he was at this time a very old man, whose days had been far prolonged, and who was waiting to be called away from earthly scenes. *In peace* refers to that happy and tranquil state of mind, which results from the full assurance of God's favor. See N. on 10: 6. Olshausen refers this to the peaceful consciousness in general that the people of Israel, and himself with them, had attained its everlasting goal in the now manifested Messiah. This may be implied, but certainly is not expressed, as Simeon evidently refers to his own peaceful decease, and cannot well be supposed to have any special reference to the blessings accruing to Israel from the promised Messiah.

30. *For mine eyes have seen, &c.* An emphatic form of expression for *I have seen*. This was the ground of his assurance, that he was now to depart from life. He had been permitted to see, according to promise (v. 26), the Messiah, and his earthly labors, he well knew, were now ended. The word *salvation* is to be interpreted here as in 1: 69, *thy Saviour*, i. e. the Saviour whom thou hast promised as the Deliverer of thy people. Simeon accommodates the language to the words of the promise (v. 26), although, in addition to beholding the infant Jesus, he had been permitted to take him in his arms.

31. *Before the face of.* A Hebraism for *before, in the sight of*. The article,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 'A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

c La. 9: 2; & 42: 6; & 49: 6; & 60: 1, 2, 3; Mat. 4: 16; Ac. 18: 47; & 28: 28.

as in v. 10, refers *all people* primarily to the Jews, to whom, in fact, the gospel was first exclusively offered. See Matt. 10: 5, 6; 15: 24. But that it has a more remote and comprehensive sense, so as to embrace all people, is evident from the next verse, which is both explanatory and confirmatory of this. The plural form, here and elsewhere often used, has not the sense which Webster and Wilkinson attach to it, *peoples* (i. e. nations), but is put collectively for *people*, as united under one general name.

32. *A light* is put in apposition with *thy salvation* (v. 30), it being designed to disclose more fully and clearly, in what sense the Messiah was to be the Saviour of his people. He was to be the moral light (i. e. teacher) of the Gentiles, revealing to them the ways of God, and the true and only method of salvation through his atoning blood. The same sentiment is repeated in the next clause, *the glory of thy people Israel*, where glory is put for *enlightening teacher*, the abstract for the concrete. In this verse, the blessings of the Messiah's reign are promised conjointly to the Jews and Gentiles, and although Simeon spoke this under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, there can be no doubt of the belief of such pious Israelites, as had studied carefully the Messianic prophecies, that the Gentiles were to participate in some degree in the same blessings. There was doubtless much that was mysterious to them, in respect to the nature and extent of his kingdom, and it cost much effort, on the part of our Lord, to possess the mind of his disciples and followers, with the true idea of his mission to man. The word rendered *to lighten* literally signifies *for the uncovering or revealing*, and refers to the revelation, made

83 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

84 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the

'fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for 'a sign which shall be spoken against;

85 (Yea, 'a sword shall pierce

*d* La. 8: 14; Ha. 14: 9; Mat. 21: 44; Ro. 9: 32, 33; 1 Co. 1: 23, 24; 2 Co. 2: 16; 1 Pa. 2: 7, 8. *e* Ac. 23: 23. *f* Pa. 43: 10; Jno. 19: 23.

through the enlightening rays of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to the Gentiles.

83. At these words of Simeon, uttered without any previous knowledge of the child, and according so well with what had been previously spoken of him, Joseph and Mary were excited to new wonder. Although they had been prepared by the previous wonderful manifestations, for the remarkable destiny of the child, yet they were doubtless very far from having attained to a full and just conception of the glorious reality. They can hardly realize that the child so helpless and dependent, is the manifested Messiah, and hence, when reminded of this by the words of the shepherds and of Simeon, they wonder at the marvellous event, almost as though they had then heard of it for the first time.

84. *Blessed them*, i. e. Joseph, Mary, and the child. Bengel, however, does not include the child, and refers to Heb. 7: 7. But the cases are not parallel, for Melchisedec's was the priestly blessing pronounced upon Abraham, but Simeon's, the invocation of God's blessing upon the parents and child, as is done when friends part, without reference to rank or station. *Said unto Mary*. Some think that Simeon particularly addressed Mary, because, before the time of the accomplishment of this prediction, Joseph is supposed to have died, and was therefore exempt from the pangs, which were to come upon Mary in view of the sufferings of Jesus. But may it not have been divinely intended, to keep in view the peculiar relation of Mary to Jesus, which Joseph only nominally shared? The pronoun *this* stands alone in the original, but is strongly demonstrative, as though Simeon had pointed with his finger to the child. *Is set for*, i. e. is destined,

appointed for. *The fall*. This may be explained as referring to what is called in Rom. 9: 33; 1 Cor. 1: 23, the *rock of stumbling and offence*, over which many were to fall through unbelief.

*Rising again*. I cannot, with Alford, refer these expressions to the same persons, as when it is said by our Lord, "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." It is better to interpret them of the discriminating and separating properties of the gospel, bringing life to some, and ruin to others, from their unbelief and obstinate rejection of its blessings. *Of many in Israel*. As the benefits of the Messianic reign were to extend to all people (v. 32), although primarily to be offered to the Jews, so here we are not to limit this rise and fall to persons of the Jewish nation only, but to those of every nation, where the gospel should be preached in subsequent times. *For a sign which shall be spoken against*, i. e. for an example of one calumniated and disobeyed. The word *sign* is here used of a miraculous manifestation, of which the advent of the Messiah was a remarkable example. Bloomfield gives this sense: "He shall be a signal example of virtue calumniated and beneficence basely requited." Olshausen finds here a reference to Christ's passion. The expression is, however, a general one, so far as reference is had to the rejection of Christ, but is to be limited, of course, to those persons to whom his appearance was to be for a fall. It is a succinct and emphatic annunciation of the universal hostility, which his doctrines would awaken in the hearts of unbelievers. *Spoken against* refers not to words only, but to every mode in which opposition may be manifested.

85. This prediction is usually referred to the pangs of our Lord's mother, on

through thy own soul also;) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser :

beholding the agonies of his crucifixion. Some refer it to the martyrdom, which she is supposed to have suffered. Olshausen and Alford interpret it of her spiritual struggles, and the sharp pangs of sorrow for sin, which must pierce her soul also, in the process of repentance and faith in this Saviour. But may not both these ideas be combined in the expression? Thus far Mary may have been supposed to congratulate herself on being the mother of the Messiah, and to have had no idea that the honor was to be mingled with much suffering. She is now disabused of this erroneous impression. Christ was to be exalted, but not until he had undergone a cruel and ignominious death, which would fill Mary's heart with anguish. She was to experience the benefits of his advent, but by those same convictions of sin and ill desert, which must be experienced by all who come in faith to Christ for salvation. A suffering Saviour is here preached for the first time in the New Testament, and fellowship with his sufferings, as a cross imposed on all who would avail themselves of the benefits of his death. That spiritual suffering is referred to here, as forming, in part at least, the sword which should pierce her soul, is evident from the preceding context, which points manifestly to a spiritual rise and fall, resulting from the mission of Christ, and also from the following context, which marks the object or purpose of this separating power of the gospel, viz. that the true character of men might be made known. At the same time I cannot but think, as above stated, that the idea of distress at the physical sufferings of Jesus, is also included in this remarkable expression. *That the thoughts, &c.* These words are to be taken with v. 34. The word *thoughts* literally signifies *reasonings*,

she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity ;

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the tem-

or the prevalent and dominant course of thought, whether good or bad. These thoughts would be *revealed* (i. e. uncovered or exposed to view) by the all-pervading light of truth. This was signally true of the Scribes and Pharisees, whose real character was unveiled by our Lord, and the thoughts of their heart shown to be full of wickedness. See Matt. 23 : 25-28.

36. *And* has here the sense of *more-over*, as it serves to introduce additional testimony to the exalted character of the child, which had just been brought into the temple. *A prophetess.* She was a worshipper of God, in whom dwelt the spirit of prophecy, and whose long life had been filled up with acts of devotion. *The daughter, &c.* The particularity with which her parentage and lineage is given, shows that she was a person whose family as well as personal history was well known to the public. *Of a great age.* She had lived with her husband seven years, and after his death eighty-four years, making in all ninety-one years. On the supposition that she was twenty years of age when she married, her age at this time must have been one hundred and ten years. Bengel remarks that she must have been twenty-four years of age, when Jerusalem fell into the power of the Romans under Pompey. *From her virginity*, i. e. from the time of her marriage.

37. *She was a widow, &c.* This is mentioned by way of contrast to the short period of her married life, and also to show that while in the prime of life, she had devoted herself to the special service of God in his temple. Trollope quotes Joseph. Ant. XVIII. 6 § 6, in proof that widowhood, especially in women whose husbands had died when they were young, was held in high estimation among the Jews. From the



ple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers 'night and day.

38 And she coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that 'looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

q Ac. 26: 7; 1 Ti. 5: 5.  
A Ma. 15: 48; v. 25; ch. 24: 21.

fact that she *departed not from the temple*, it would seem that she occupied some private apartment of the building, and lent her services, as they might be needed, to those who came there for worship. Her time was, however, principally occupied in fasting and prayer. *Night and day* is to be referred rather to *prayers* than to *fastings*, although the latter may have been at times so extended, as to embrace the whole night. The words are however to be taken in the sense of *continually, without interruption* (see 18: 7), referring to a life of active piety and zeal in the service of God. It is not implied that she never at any time left the temple, but that she lived within the sacred precincts, and was habitually present at the temple worship.

38. *Coming in*; literally, *standing near*, the expression conforming to the fact just stated, that she was continually in the temple. *That instant*; literally, *that hour or time*, when Simeon had uttered the foregoing words. *Gave thanks likewise*; literally, *and she too* (i. e. in turn) *praised the Lord* as Simeon had done (v. 28). The word *Lord* refers here to Jehovah. *Of him*, i. e. of the Messiah, whom she discerned by the spirit of prophecy the infant child to be. The noun to which this pronoun grammatically refers, is to be elicited from the word *redemption* which follows, and which, by the common figure, the abstract for the concrete, is put for *one who redeems, a redeemer*. For the meaning of the word *redemption*, see N. on 1: 68, 74, 75; 2: 25. *To all them*. If this took place, as Alford thinks, at the hour of prayer, there would be numbers flocking at such a time to the temple. *That looked, &c.*

39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

40 'And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with

† V. 52; ch. 1: 80.

These were pious Israelites, who, like Simeon, Zacharias, and the shepherds, were in a state of prayerful expectation of the Messiah.

39. After the presentation in the temple, Joseph and Mary returned to Bethlehem, where they were visited by the Magi (Matt. 2: 1-12), and afterwards took their flight into Egypt (Matt. 2: 13-23). This portion of Luke is therefore parallel to Matt. 2: 22, 23, and serves to explain what is there left out of sight, that the parents of Jesus returned to Nazareth, because it was *their own city*, or that in which they formerly had dwelt. Matthew refers to this, only to show that Jesus was brought up in that despised city. Luke, whose plan led him to speak of the previous dwelling-place and condition of Joseph and Mary, refers to Nazareth, as their place of abode before and after the birth of Jesus. We see from this that both narrations leave out important events, but yet not essential to the integrity of the history in either case. Matthew makes no reference to many things of importance narrated by Luke. This evangelist, on the other hand, says nothing of the visit of the Magi, the murder of the children at Bethlehem, and the flight into Egypt. Such omissions indicate that they were independent writers, both in the arrangement and selection of the materials of their history. The words, *all things according to the law of the Lord*, refer to the circumcision of Jesus, and his purification and presentation in the temple.

40. *And the child grew, &c.* This verse can be explained only on the hypothesis, that Jesus had a human soul capable of increasing in wisdom and knowledge. What is here said con-

wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

41 ¶ Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

& Ex. 23: 15, 17; & 34: 23; De. 16: 1, 16.

futes, beyond a question, the high Arian dogma, that the Logos took the place of the human soul in Christ. Other passages, as well as this, furnish abundant evidence that Jesus had a human soul, with properties admitting of enlargement, which could not have been true, had the Logos been that soul. In respect to the verbal explanation, the clause, *the child grew*, refers to his physical development, while *waxed strong in spirit* is to be taken of intellectual growth and expansion. In every stage of life, childhood, youth, and manhood, he was filled (literally, *becoming filled*) with wisdom, i. e. there was such an unfolding of his mental powers, that in every stage he was perfect, or, as Olshausen well remarks, "he was completely a child, completely a youth, completely a man, and thus hallowed all the stages of human development, but nothing incongruous ever appeared in him, which would have been the case, if utterances of a riper age had escaped him in childhood." *Grace of God*, i. e. tokens of the divine blessing. His piety was as conspicuous as his mental and physical development. He was perfect in all respects.

41-52. VISIT TO THE TEMPLE AT THE PASSOVER.—*Jerusalem*.

41. *Now his parents, &c.* The males only were required to be present at the three festivals in Jerusalem. The attendance of females was not however forbidden, and it is quite probable that pious females often, on such occasions, accompanied their husbands. See 1 Sam. 1: 7, 22, 24. The school of Hillel made it obligatory upon women to go up once each year to the passover. It is not to be inferred from this passage, that the parents of Jesus went up to no other yearly feast than the passover, but that upon this feast they were in constant attendance. They seem to

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned,

have been in no fear of Archelaus, who either overlooked them in the multitudes attending this yearly festival, or manifested no intention of carrying out any further the cruel designs of his father Herod. Some think that this refers to the period, which succeeded the banishment of Archelaus to Vienne in Gaul. But this event did not take place until about ten years after he had succeeded to his father in the government, and the words *every year* can hardly be used of the year or two, which intervened between that and the time when our Lord was twelve years of age. If it be objected that Joseph and Mary did not return to Bethlehem, through fear of Archelaus (Matt. 2: 22), it will be readily seen that the jealousy of this prince might have been excited by their return to Judea, and therefore they were divinely directed to repair to Nazareth, where they would soon be forgotten by him amidst the multiplicity of affairs urgently claiming his attention.

42. *When he was twelve years, &c.* It is quite evident on the face of this passage, that Jesus now for the first time accompanied his parents to the feast of the passover. How little did the throngs which filled Jerusalem on that occasion imagine, that the real Lamb, who was to be offered for the redemption of a world, the antitype of the lamb slain at the paschal feast, was there present. *After the custom of the feast*, which required its celebration at Jerusalem. Before the erection of the temple, the people repaired to the place where the tabernacle was raised.

43. *Had fulfilled the days*, i. e. the day when the passover was eat, and the seven subsequent days of unleavened bread. On account of this latter observance, the passover was sometimes called the *feast of unleavened bread*. See Ex. 12: 15, 17; 23: 15; Levit.

the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

23 : 4-8, &c. *Tarried behind.* Some erroneously suppose that he left the caravan, after it had commenced its march. It is evident that he did not join it at all, being somehow overlooked by those, to whom he had been given in charge. *Knew not of it.* It would appear from this, that Jesus had been committed temporarily to the charge of some one of the friends of the family, whose station was in some other part of the caravan. Had he been in the immediate company of his parents, his absence would have been noticed during the day. This view exonerates the parents from every charge of neglect. On the other hand, the persons with whom he was supposed to be, might justly infer that he was with his parents by some after arrangement, and hence they felt no solicitude at his absence.

44. *In the company of travellers.* Persons in those times going in the same direction, united themselves into companies or caravans for security and companionship. The caravan here was doubtless the smaller one, called *kafle* or *kafle*. The length of a day's journey depended somewhat upon the distance they had to go, in order to encamp where there was a supply of good water. The company was in motion quite early in the morning, sometimes even before day, and made it a point, if possible, to stop for the night before it was dark, in order to prepare their evening meal, and have all things in a state of readiness for an early march the next morning. *Sought him;* or more literally, *commenced searching for him.* He was missed at night, for then the members of a family came together, each family lodging by itself. *Among*

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

*their kinsfolk, &c.* Here they would most naturally expect to find him, for the members of families, connected by relationship or friendship, doubtless often mingled together in the march, to beguile its tedious monotony by social converse. Olshausen thinks that the parents had been accustomed to the thoughtful and obedient habits of the child, and therefore took no alarm at his absence, believing him to be among their kindred and acquaintances.

45. *They turned back* on the following morning. *Seeking him* all their way back to the city. They supposed him to have started with them, and through some casualty to have become separated from the caravan.

46. *After three days,* i. e. on the third day. One day had been spent in their journey, another in returning to the city, and the third day he was found, as here related, in the temple. Alford and Olshausen interpret the three days as spent in searching for him at Jerusalem, or at least, as Meyer suggests, reckoning from the time when he was missed from the caravan. *In the temple,* i. e. in one of the apartments of the main building, where the Jewish doctors held their schools. *Sitting in the midst.* Some refer this to the position of the learners or disciples, sitting on the floor at the feet of their teachers, who sat on raised benches of a semi-circular form. But I think nothing further is meant here, than that Jesus sat among them, or in their company, as one of their auditors. *The doctors.* These were the Jewish Rabbis, a class of men who sprang up after the captivity, and who expounded the law in the temple and synagogues, were consulted on doubtful points of casuistry,

47 And 'all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48 And when they saw him, *Mat. 7: 28; Ma. 1: 22; ch. 4: 22, 32; John 7: 15, 46.*

and held public lectures and discussions, wherever they could find auditors. *Asking them questions, not disputing,* as some unthinkingly take the sense to be. The child, who sat in this grave and learned presence, was humble and respectful, and his questions were not those of a pert and spoiled precocity of intellect, but of a youthful mind, modestly searching after truth, and seeking from the lips of age and wisdom a solution of difficulties, which he had already met in meditating upon the law of God, and which it was the province of these doctors to expound. "It was the custom in the Jewish schools for the scholars to ask questions of their teachers; and a great part of the Rabbinical books consists of the answers of the Rabbis to such questions." Alford.

47. *All that heard him*, refers to the doctors, and others who were present as disciples or listeners. *At his understanding*, manifested in the profound and important questions he proposed. It would be wrong to refer this eminent display of the acuteness of his intellect to any exercise of the divine nature, so mysteriously blended with the human in him. We must regard him simply as a thoughtful, reflective child, who had already attained to a high degree of spiritual knowledge, and discriminating views of truth. The word *answers*, shows in what way his superior intelligence was principally indicated. His questions showed this, but much more his answers to those proposed by the doctors.

48. *They* (i. e. his parents) *saw him* (literally, *seeing him*, the prominent idea lying in the verb *were amazed*) engaged in this conversation with the Rabbis. *Were amazed*. Such unusual strength of intellect, and correct views of truth, astonished not only those persons who had never before seen the

they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

child, but also his parents, to whose mind this scene doubtless brought up in remembrance the incidents of his birth and infancy. In view of such a history as his, Mary should have paused before she addressed him, as she did, in terms of reproof. *His mother said, &c.* Her words were addressed to Jesus in the hearing of all. Equally open was his reply, yet by no one, not even by his mother, was its deep and mysterious import understood. *Why hast thou, &c.* How couldst thou have requited the love and care, with which we have watched over you, by doing that which you knew would give us such anxious solicitude? *Thus* refers to the circumstance of his staying behind without his parents' knowledge. The silence of Joseph on this occasion is regarded by some, as referable to the peculiar relation of reputed father, which he sustained to Jesus. But whether this was the cause of his silence, or the pent-up feelings of Mary during the hours of anxious search, which had become so irrepressible, that she anticipated her husband in addressing the child, the language she made use of was such, as to bring out in his reply the striking contrast between his earthly and heavenly parentage. *Thy father*. This shows that he had been taught to regard Joseph as his real father, and takes away all ground for the cavil, that he had been taught, by a doting and weak-minded mother, to believe in his divine parentage. *Have sought; literally, were seeking thee*. The tense of the verb implies long and uninterrupted search, which sense our common version has failed to give. *Sorrowing*. A stronger term in the original, than this English word by which it is translated. The word means mental anguish, amounting to absolute distress of body (see 16: 24, where the word is used of the physical torment of Dives), and of

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

mind, Acts 20 : 38. As hour after hour passed in fruitless search, their feelings must have been wrought up to the highest pitch of distress.

49. The calm firmness of his reply, so different from what might have been expected from a lad of twelve years, when subjected to parental reproof, must have added to the astonishment of his parents, and of all others who heard it. Mary seems to have returned no answer, nor to have questioned him further, as to what he meant by words of such mysterious import. There may have been, at that early age, something in his look and manner, which repressed all undue familiarity and vain curiosity, even on the part of his parents. *How; literally, on what account, why is it.* With the words *that ye sought me*, we must mentally supply from Mary's question the word *sorrowing*, inasmuch as the answer of Jesus does not imply censure for their having sought him, but for having done this with such anxious solicitude. Had they recurred to his high spiritual mission, so fully revealed to them at the time of his birth, they would have attributed his absence to the right cause, and sought him at once in the temple, which was his Father's house (John 2 : 16). That the point of his reply has reference to the state of mental distress with which they sought him, appears very clear from the following words. *Wist ye not? Did ye not know from previous revelations? That I must be about my Father's business.* "Here already is the germ of that sacred *must*, which the Lord so often utters in the subsequent way of His obedience." Stier. The word rendered in our common version *business*, is not found in the original, and should have been italicized by the translators. It was a good selection of a word, whereby to express the general and most enlarged sense of the original. See John 9 : 4; 14 : 31. But

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

m John 2 : 16. n Ch. 9 : 45; & 18 : 34.

the context, as well as idiomatic structure, points to the word *temple* or *house* to be supplied. We may then render it: *knew ye not that I ought to be in my Father's house*, and that there ye should have sought me? In regard to the consciousness, which these words indicate Jesus to have had of his mysterious union with the Father, it is beyond our power to determine when it first developed itself. The subject is altogether involved in an impenetrable mystery. Olshausen's favorite notion—which he takes occasion to bring forward frequently in his commentary, and to teach which he thinks Luke to have introduced this incident in the childhood of Jesus, that there was a gradual development of Christ's consciousness of divinity, conforming itself to this growth of his intellectual powers—has been well replied to by Prof. Kendrick: "if the *child's* consciousness precludes the element of divinity, why not equally the *man's* consciousness? The distance of the two states from each other is lost, in the infinite interval which separates both from Deity. It may well be questioned whether, in fixing the moment when the divine consciousness first developed itself in Jesus, Olshausen is not venturing beyond his depth. Who shall say that Jesus was ever destitute of it?" We must guard against supposing that our Lord intended his reply as a rebuke to his parents for having sought him, but for such an oversight of his divine mission and parentage, taught them by his miraculous conception, as well as by the express annunciation of the angel, that they should have spent their time in a sorrowful search for him, instead of coming directly to the temple, his Father's house, where he might have been expected to be found, as every child at his own home.

50. *They understood not, &c.* It seems to us strange after the revelation

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

made to them (1: 32, 35; Matt. 1: 20), that they should have been at a loss to understand the child's reply. But the years of his infancy and childhood passing away without any striking incident, they may be supposed to have partially lost sight of the wondrous circumstances attending his birth. Perhaps also they never understood fully the depth of meaning, which, in the light of the New Testament, we find no difficulty in attaching to these declarations. Certain it is that this manifested consciousness, on the part of Jesus, of his high paternity and mission, threw Joseph and Mary into the profoundest reflection, as to the full import of the strange words he had uttered.

51. *Went down with them.* In Oriental countries, the metropolis was spoken of as elevated above the other cities of the land. Such also was true geographically of Jerusalem. *Was subject to them.* This is put in strong antithesis with the divine parentage, which he claimed in v. 49. It is inserted to prevent any inference, that Jesus did not afterwards render filial obedience and service to his earthly parents. This is his last introduction to the reader, until the time of his public ministry. We learn, however, from Matt. 13: 55; Mark 6: 3, that Joseph was a carpenter, which trade Jesus also learned and followed. As no further mention is made of Joseph, it is thought by some, that he died soon after the incident here mentioned. But that he must have lived long enough to have taught Jesus his trade, is evident from the passages above cited, and indeed there is nothing in the sacred narrative, from which can be drawn any data as to the time and place of his death. It is not strange, considering his relation to Jesus as only his reputed father, that no further mention is made of him in the sacred narrative. But little is said of his

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

o V. 19; Da. 7: 28.  
p 1 Sa. 3: 28; v. 40.

mother, and that quite incidentally, and in subordination to some other great point of interest. *His mother, &c.* She seems to have been of a more observing and reflective turn of mind than Joseph. Her relations to the child were also more intimate and peculiar, and the revelation made to her by the angel was more full and explicit, than the one vouchsafed to Joseph, which was a dream. *In her heart.* She treasured them up in her memory, and pondered upon their mysterious import. The word *sayings*, has here the more general signification of *events*, including both actions and words.

52. This verse covers the eighteen years of his life, which intervened between the incident just mentioned, and the time of his public ministry. During this time his mental powers were constantly enlarging and strengthening, and his physical growth was uninterrupted by sickness or disease. Some take the word *stature*, in the sense of *age*, and translate "advanced in wisdom as he advanced in age." But this is tautological, for how can one advance in wisdom, and not at the same time be advancing in age? The natural and apposite reference is to his physical development. *In favor with God* (see N. on v. 40). A question naturally suggests itself, if Jesus was always pure and sinless, how he could be said to increase in holiness, which is implied in his advancement in the divine favor. To this it may be replied, that progressive holiness does not necessarily imply sin, in any stage of its development. Gabriel is sinless, yet his holiness is but a remote approximation to that of God. A saint raised to heaven is free from sin, yet no one would say that this glorified saint has made such attainments in holiness, and stands so high in the favor of God, as Gabriel or Michael. Our Lord in his human nature advanced

## CHAPTER III.

**N**OW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cesar,

Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip

in holiness. In answer to prayer, he obtained from time to time clearer and more exalted views of God, was confirmed more and more in habits of holy living, and made higher progress in all that pertains to the sanctification of the spirit. But this by no means implies, that he ever did a wrong act or had a sinful thought, or that his nature was other than pure and holy. Nor does it imply that in his divine nature, he was not from his earliest incarnation infinitely holy. The only thing meant is that, as a perfect man, he passed through all the appropriate developments of childhood, youth, and manhood, exhibiting in each stage a faultless character, upon which the eye of God rested with holy complacency. *And man.* He was so amiable, gentle, and unselfish, as to secure also the love and approbation of his fellow-men. In all the relations of life, he was an example of every thing lovely and of good report. Alford thinks that this favor of man could not have lasted much beyond the years of gathering vigor and zeal, as he must soon have begun to bear testimony against the sins of those around him. To this long standing feeling of hatred for his fidelity in testifying to the sins of the world, this same expositor attributes the incident noted in 4 : 28, 29, which could scarcely have arisen *only* from the anger of the moment. But this is mere conjecture, and no view should be adopted, which would beget the impression, that during these years of subjection to his parents in Nazareth, our Lord was a harsh censor of the conduct of his fellow-townsmen, or that his habits were so ascetic and morose, that he did not freely mingle in social intercourse with those around him.

## CHAPTER III.

1-18. THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST. THE DESERT. THE JORDAN.

We are now to be introduced to our

Lord's public ministry. As Luke now synchronizes to a greater or less extent with Matthew and Mark, there will henceforth be found much, that we have before commented on in the parallel passages of those Evangelists. Unless therefore new matter is introduced by Luke, or the incidents of the narrative are so varied as to require some comment, the reader will be referred to my previous volume on Matthew and Mark. It is to be hoped that no one will shrink from the additional labor which such a reference imposes, as the general view of a passage will be much clearer and more complete from one comment, in view of the three narratives, than though it were obtained from independent and isolated comments on each passage by itself. A striking example of this may be seen in the account of the demoniacs of Gadara, where between the three evangelists there is such varied incident with essential agreement, that they must all be read together, in order to get a complete and connected view of the whole transaction. In regard to passages, where there is almost a strict verbal agreement, as in the account of the Temptation, it would be useless to encumber the notes by a threefold explanation of the text. This remark will also hold true of many portions, in which parables or sayings are recorded by Luke in precisely the same connection and language, in which they are found in Matthew or Mark. A reference, in such cases, to the previous comment seems to be all that is necessary.

1. The particularity with which Luke refers to the time when our Lord began his public ministry, evinces the accurate and well informed historian. Judea having been reduced to a Roman province, the time is very properly designated by the names of the Roman emperor, and those who held office under him. *In the fifteenth year, &c.* If strict reference is had to the time when

tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 \* Annas and Caiaphas being

a John 11: 49, 51; & 18: 13; Ac. 4: 6.

Tiberius became sole emperor, our Lord, at the time of his baptism, must have been thirty-two years old or upward. The fifteenth year from the time when Tiberius began to reign, was in the year of the founding of Rome 781, and, reckoning back from this period thirty years, the birth of our Lord would be about 751. But Herod died in 750, which, according to this computation, would be about one year before the birth of Jesus; whereas it appears from Matthew, that our Lord was some months old, and in Egypt, when Herod died. Here then is a discrepancy of nearly two years to be accounted for and removed. This has been done, and we think successfully, by dating the fifteenth year of Tiberius from the time when he was first associated in the empire with Augustus, which was three years previous to his being sole emperor. This would make Jesus, when he entered upon his public ministry, about thirty, which latitude seems to be given in the form of expression, *about thirty*, in v. 23. *Pontius Pilate*. See N. on Matt. 27: 2. *Judea*. See N. on Matt. 2: 22. *Herod being tetrarch*. See N. on 14: 1. *Philip* was the son of Herod the Great by Cleopatra. After his father's death, he was made tetrarch of several provinces, among which was Iturea, supposed by recent geographers to be the same with the modern Jeidûr, a province lying south of the territory of Damascus. *Region of Trachonitis*. This lay east of Iturea. It was the north-eastern district of the habitable region east of Jordan, its borders being the Arabian desert. *Lysanias*, the son or grandson of the prince of this name, who was killed (B. C. 34) by Anthony, at the instigation of Cleopatra. *Abilene* was a small province, north of Iturea, on the eastern declivity of Anti-Libanus.

2. *Annas and Caiaphas being the*

the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3 <sup>b</sup> And he came into all the

b Mat. 3: 1; Ma. 1: 4.

*high-priests*; literally, in the time of the high-priest Annas and Caiaphas. But although found here in the singular, the word *high priest* includes in the office both the persons named. As only one of these could be high-priest at the same time, and as Caiaphas held this office during the public ministry of Christ (see Matt. 26: 3, 57; John 11: 49; 18: 14, 28), we must suppose that Annas, his father-in-law, who had been high-priest, but afterwards deposed by Valerius Grattus, is here mentioned, either on account of his previous dignity and relationship to Caiaphas, or because, in the estimation of the Jews, he was yet the legitimate high-priest. *The word of God*. This corresponds to the phrase so often found in the Old Testament, when the divine word or message was communicated to the prophets by the Holy Ghost. John is here declared to have entered upon the office of public teacher, at the express command of God. This was implied, but not directly asserted, in the parallel passage of Matthew and Mark. *Came unto*; literally, *upon*, the original imparting the idea of a descending and resting of this divine word upon John, so that he was henceforth continually under its influence. *John the son of Zacharias*. The dignity and importance of his mission rendered highly suitable this particularity of detail, even to the full mention of his name and parentage. *In the wilderness*. See N. on Matt. 3: 1.

3. *And he came, &c.* This was in obedience to the divine word, which had come to John in the wilderness. He now came forth from his seclusion, and began his work as a public reformer. *Into all the country*. He itinerated through this region, until such crowds gathered to hear him, that he chose a central and convenient place (see Matt. 3: 5; Mark 1: 5), to preach



country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance 'for the remission of sins;

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

c Ch. 1: 77.

d Is. 40: 3; Mat. 3: 3; Ma. 1: 3; John 1: 23.

to them, and perform the rite of baptism. *About Jordan.* This region was contiguous to the desert, to which John had retired "until the day of his showing unto Israel." See 1: 80. Here also would be found plenty of water for the vast numbers, who flocked to his ministry and baptism. See N. on John 3: 23. *Preaching the baptism of repentance.* See N. on Matt. 3: 11. *For the remission,* i. e. the remission of sin being the object or purpose of the baptismal rite. John's preaching and baptism did not of itself procure the remission of sin, which could be effected only by the death of Christ. It however prepared the way for this result. Those who repented and reformed their lives under his ministry, received the pardon of their sins, although the great atoning sacrifice had not actually been offered. The benefits of Christ's death were enjoyed by those who lived before, as well as after his advent, although they had to look forward by faith in a Messiah to come, instead of believing in one, whose advent was a historical fact.

4. See Ns. on Matt. 3: 3. Bengel says that repentance is described in vs. 4, 5, and remission of sins is implied in v. 6. *Book of the words,* i. e. book of the prophecy. The word *book* is here used often of the parts combined into a whole, as the *Book of Psalms*, 20: 42.

5. The quotation in Luke is extended beyond that of Matthew and Mark. *Every valley* (literally, *ravine, chasm*) *shall be filled.* In the original prophecy, *shall be exalted.* There is no difference in sense, as the filling up of a valley or ravine is equivalent to raising

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be made smooth;*

6 And 'all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be bap-

e Ps. 98: 2; Is. 63: 10; ch. 2: 10.

or exalting it. *Every mountain and hill, &c.* Thus by the filling of the valleys and levelling of the mountains and hills, a smooth and even road would be formed, upon which the king and his retinue might travel with pleasure and safety. This is further denoted by the straightening of every crooked path, and the smoothing of all rough places. The whole imagery is drawn from the preparation of a road, through a rough and uneven country, for the triumphal march of a king.

6. *Shall see the salvation.* In the original prophecy the word *salvation* is wanting, the object of the verb being the *glory of the Lord* in the preceding clause, which Luke in his quotation omitted. *Salvation* is used here as in 1: 69; 2: 30, for *Saviour, Messiah.* In like manner *all flesh* is here put for *all mankind.* The general idea in its connection is, that so conspicuous would be the royal and magnificent approach on this wide, smooth, and level highway, that it would be seen even at a great distance. What was designated in the original prophecy, the *glory of Jehovah*, and here, in its Messianic sense, the *salvation of God*, which would be seen by all mankind, was the glorious approach of the King of Zion, on this royal road made ready for his triumphal procession. Stripped of the metaphor, these depressions, elevations, and crooked ways refer to the various obstacles, in the way of the Messiah's approach and sway, arising from the pride, perverseness, and unbelief of the Jewish nation, at the time of John's public ministry.

7. *The multitude that came forth*

tized of him, 'O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

f Mat. 3: 7.

g Mat. 7: 19.

from various quarters of the land. In Matt. 3: 7, we have the corresponding words *many of the Pharisees and Sadducees*. As Luke was writing for the Gentiles, there was no necessity of referring to these classes specifically and by name. *O generation*, &c. See N. on Matt. 3: 7.

8, 9. These verses agree almost verbatim with Matt. 3: 8-10, on which see Notes. What in Matthew is *think not to say*, is in Luke *begin not* (i. e. do not attempt) *to say*. The one refers to the inward impulse; the other, to its outward manifestation.

10. *The people*, i. e. the multitudes referred to in v. 7. *What shall we do then?* i. e. if such a terrible excision is to take place, what must we do in order to escape this awful doom? A similar question is found in Acts 2: 37. It is the natural and spontaneous expression of alarm, in view of spiritual judgments. See Acts 16: 30.

11. *He that hath two coats*. The general principles of benevolence are here inculcated, not as in themselves rendering the person who practises them worthy of salvation, but yet of necessary performance, in order to obtain the divine forgiveness for sin. The duty of benevolence is here specified, because its contraries, avarice and selfishness, were the prevailing sins of the

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10 And the people asked him, saying, 'What shall we do then?

11 He answereth and saith unto them, 'He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

12 Then 'came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

13 And he said unto them, 'Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

A Ac. 2: 37. f Ch. 11: 41; 2 Co. 8: 14; Ja. 2: 15, 16; 1 Jno. 3: 17; & 4: 20. g Mat. 21: 32; ch. 7: 29. h Ch. 19: 8.

Jewish nation. Clothing and food are here representative of all the physical necessities of men; and for these, the *coat*, being the principal garment, and *meat* (literally, eatables, *substantial food*) are generically put. The sentiment is that wealth, instead of being hoarded up, should be freely bestowed upon the necessities of our fellow-men, even when there are such large demands made upon us, that we must part with one of the only two coats we possess. The principle, thus strongly laid down, is explained in N. on Matt. 5: 42.

12. *Publicans*. See N. on Matt. 5: 46. These publicans are spoken of as coming *also* to John's baptism (see v. 7), on account of their notoriously bad character, which would have excluded the idea of their attendance upon his ministry, had they not been specially adverted to in the narrative. *Master* (or *teacher*). As neither of the other classes here referred to used this term of respect, we may regard it as indicative of the deep humility and distress for sin, with which these publicans approached John.

13. The chief sin of the publicans, and one which was the natural growth of the method of collecting taxes by farming them out (see N. on Matt. 5: 46), was extortion. John enjoins, therefore, upon them the most scrupu-

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, "neither accuse any

— Ex. 23: 1; La. 19: 11.

lous integrity, and forbids the exaction of any thing, beyond the legal tax which they were to collect. *Exact*; literally, do (from one), i. e. collect or extort (see N. on 19: 28). *What is appointed*, i. e. the legal taxes.

14. *Soldiers*; literally, *men on the march*, or *engaged in a military expedition*. Some think from this, that they were soldiers in the army of Herod Antipas, and at this time marching against Aratas. But we can hardly suppose that, while engaged in such an active service, they would turn aside to attend upon John's ministry. It is better therefore to refer it to troops, who were keeping garrison in some of the towns in the vicinity. Doddridge argues that they could not have been Gentile soldiers, or John would have begun his instruction by urging upon them the worship of the true God. If they were Jewish soldiers, they must have been from Galilee, as those of Judea, now reduced to a province, were mostly Romans. *Do violence to no man*. Insolence and overbearance are proverbially characteristic of soldiers, stationed in a conquered province to keep it in subjection. The verb here employed has the literal signification, *to shake violently*, and hence, *to affright, terrify*, in order to extort money or gain some selfish end. *Accuse any falsely* in order to receive a reward for such information. It hardly need be remarked, how common is the practice for soldiers, set over a subjected province, to become spies and informers.

*Wages* includes rations as well as stipends, the latter of which was about three cents a day. This word is found in the tropical sense of *wages of sin*, in Rom. 6: 23; 2 Cor. 11: 8. This exhortation of John is aimed against a mutinous demand for higher wages, and any unlawful attempt to increase their

falsely; and be content with your wages.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

resources by intimidation or false accusation.

15. *Were in expectation*, and waiting for some decided manifestation of John's real official character. This state of doubtful hope, into which the people were brought by John's appearance, is well explained in John 1: 19-22, where it appears that, when he did not declare himself with sufficient clearness, messengers were sent to him with the direct inquiry as to who he was. His reply disabused them of every notion that he was the Messiah. *All men*. The whole community was pervaded with anxious hope that John was the true Messiah, and not only was it conversed upon, when men assembled together, but it was uppermost in every one's thoughts. The word rendered *mused*, has in the original a commercial sense, and refers to the reckoning up and settlement of accounts. As the items of such accounts are arranged on the credit side of the sheet or its opposite, and then balanced, so that it can be seen which preponderates, so the word came to signify a balancing of arguments and proofs, adverse to or in favor of a given opinion, in order to reach a definite conclusion as to its truth or falsehood. *Whether he were the Christ*. This indirect question has that negative form in the original, which implies an affirmative answer. The people had scarcely a doubt that John was the Christ. This confidence is also strengthened by a particle in the original, which gives a shade of surprise, as though the thing were well nigh certain, and yet of too good import to be believed. Our corresponding form of expression would be, *whether in the world he were the Christ, or in the direct form of interrogation, can it be possible that he is the Christ?* The conclusion to which they were fast

16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

*n* Mat. 3: 11.  
*o* Mt. 4: 12; Mat. 13: 30.

arriving, that John was the Messiah, shows how necessary was his emphatic denial that he was that personage. With this portion of Luke, the reader should compare John 1: 19-27.

16. The people being in such danger of mistaking the official rank of John, he modestly but firmly disclaims all right to the title of Messiah, but at the same time avers that he was soon to make his appearance. *Saying unto them all.* His denial was open and public. It was made both to those who had come to his baptism, and to the priests and Levites who had been sent from Jerusalem, to learn from his own lips his official character and position. He did not permit a doubt to linger in any mind, as to his relative inferiority to the Messiah. *One mightier than I.* The original, both here and in Mark, is very emphatic, *the Mightier than I* or any other created being. *Cometh*, i. e. is approaching. On the general sentiment of this and the following verse, see *Ns.* on Matt. 3: 11, 12.

18. *Many other things, &c.* The evangelists are necessarily brief in their account of John's ministry, their design being to make it simply introductory to the baptism and ministry of Jesus. *Exhortation.* A generic word embracing admonition, instruction, exhortation, and the like. *Preached he*; literally, *was he preaching or evangelizing.* Although a stern reform-

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 "But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 ¶ Now when all the people were baptized, 'it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized,

*p* Mat. 14: 3; *Ma.* 6: 17.  
*q* Mat. 3: 13; John 1: 32.

er, oftentimes addressing the people in the language of rebuke, yet as he spoke of the Messiah, and prepared his hearers to receive the gospel in its full richness, as it was afterwards proclaimed by Jesus, he was also the messenger of good tidings.

19, 20. See *Ns.* on Matt. 14: 3-5; Mark 6: 17-20. Luke refers to this imprisonment of John by way of anticipation, its proper place being after 4: 14. The passage as it stands here is parenthetical. From the incident here related, we see in John the true reformer, whose zeal for the honor of his God was such, that he looked upon human dignity and rank as of little moment. He not only rebuked Herod for his unlawful connection with Herodias, but also for his evil life, and this doubtless contributed to his imprisonment by this wicked prince. The three evangelists should be read in connection, in order to see clearly the relations, which subsisted between John and Herod.

21. *When all the people, &c.* We are not with Alford to suppose, that all the people had been baptized before our Lord's baptism, for it is quite evident that John continued to preach and baptize, until the time of his imprisonment. We must therefore attach to *all* the restricted sense *great numbers.* Some avoid this necessity by interpreting: *during the time when all the people*

and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son in thee I am well pleased.

23 And Jesus himself began to be 'about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) 'the son

r See Nu. 4 : 3, 35, 39, 43, 47.  
s Mat. 13 : 55; John 6 : 42.

were being baptized. But the tense of the original does not admit this. Webster and Wilkinson correctly say, that the tense "expresses that our Lord was baptized at the same time with the people, that there was no distinction in point of time between his baptism and theirs." This must be the true exposition, if *all* is pressed to include the whole number baptized by John. And praying. On this additional particular in Luke, as well as the words, *in a bodily shape*, see N. on Matt. 8 : 16. Bengel remarks that Luke frequently refers to the prayers of Jesus, especially on important occasions. See 6 : 12; 9 : 18, 19; 22 : 32, 41; 23 : 26. He also takes *Thou* (v. 22) as emphatic, the manifestation being a response to his prayer.

22. And the Holy Ghost descended. In Matthew and Mark the words are, *he saw the Spirit descending*. We have therefore the twofold form of representation, that the thing took place, and was seen to take place. No higher assurance of the reality of the occurrence could be given. *Bodily shape*. "A visible appearance similar to the Shechinah in the Old Testament." Webster and Wilkinson. *In thee*. Matthew and Mark: *in whom*. The form of expression in Luke is the more emphatic.

23. *Jesus himself*, or *this same Jesus*, the pronoun serving to distinguish him from others. *Began to be*. This is evidently a mistaken translation. The word rendered *began*, is a participle in the original, and so removed from the

of Joseph, which was *the son of Heli*,

24 Which was *the son of Matthat*, which was *the son of Levi*, which was *the son of Melchi*, which was *the son of Janna*, which was *the son of Joseph*,

25 Which was *the son of Matathias*, which was *the son of Amos*, which was *the son of Nam*, which was *the son of Esli*, which was *the son of Nagge*,

26 Which was *the son of*

verb rendered *to be* (but literally was), that the translation should be: *and Jesus was about thirty years of age, (when thus) beginning (or entering upon) his public ministry*. This interpretation is adopted by the best modern commentators, although Bloomfield adheres to the translation: *Jesus was beginning to be about thirty years*, i. e. he had nearly completed his 30th year. Weisler constructs and translates thus: *and he was, when he began* (or as we should say *in the beginning*), *about 30 years of age*. This does not differ essentially from that, given above as the true interpretation. In regard to the time here spoken of, *thirty* must not be taken as a round number, so that *about thirty* might be referred to any year, within two or three of that number on either side. It must be taken as a specific designation of time, the indefiniteness, contained in *about*, referring to some few months above or under that period of life. As Alford remarks, he could not well be under, since thirty years of age was the appointed time, for the commencement of public service of God by the Levites. See Numb. 4 : 3, 23, 43, 47. *Being as was supposed*, &c. i. e. being the reputed son of Joseph. *Which was the son of Heli*. It has always been regarded a very difficult task to harmonize the genealogical tables given by Matthew and Luke. There can be no doubt as to the design of Matthew, which was to trace our Lord's pedigree back from his reputed

Maath, which was *the son* of Mat-  
tathias, which was *the son* of  
Semei, which was *the son* of Jo-  
seph, which was *the son* of Judah,

27 Which was *the son* of Joan-  
na, which was *the son* of Rhesa,  
which was *the son* of Zorobabel,  
which was *the son* of Salathiel,  
which was *the son* of Neri,

28 Which was *the son* of Mel-  
chi, which was *the son* of Addi,  
which was *the son* of Cosam,  
which was *the son* of Elmodam,  
which was *the son* of Er,

29 Which was *the son* of Jose,

father Joseph, in order to furnish legal evidence to the Jews, that Jesus of Nazareth was, through his male ancestry, the lineal descendant of David and of Abraham. But how is it that Luke diverges from Joseph, and pursues the pedigree of our Lord through a different series to David? How is it that Joseph is in the one case declared to be the son of Jacob, and in the other, the son of Heli? Alford's mode of explanation, that the two genealogies are both in the line of Joseph and not of Mary, is a notable instance of begging the very question at issue, and brings with it the still greater difficulty, of accounting for the disagreement of names in the two tables. If we suppose the two Evangelists to have been endowed with common sense, without inspiration, they could not have fallen into so obvious an error as to give a list of our Lord's paternal ancestry, so totally diverse from Joseph back to David. That each of his ancestors had two distinct names, is too absurd to believe for a moment. We are therefore driven to the alternative, that two distinct pedigrees are given, and that Luke traces our Lord's genealogy in the line of Mary. This will require the word *son*, in the link between Joseph and Heli, to be taken in the sense of *son-in-law*, a meaning which it has in 1 Sam. 24 : 16 ; 26 : 21, 25. Compare also Ruth. 1 : 11, 12, 13. That this is its true

which was *the son* of Eliezer,  
which was *the son* of Jorim,  
which was *the son* of Matthat,  
which was *the son* of Levi,

30 Which was *the son* of Sim-  
eon, which was *the son* of Judah,  
which was *the son* of Joseph,  
which was *the son* of Jonan,  
which was *the son* of Eliakim,

31 Which was *the son* of Me-  
lea, which was *the son* of Menan,  
which was *the son* of Mattatha,  
which was *the son* of 'Nathan,  
" which was *the son* of David,

† Zec. 12 : 12.    u 2 Sa. 5 : 14 ; 1 Ch. 3 : 5.

signification here appears from the following considerations :

1. If Heli was Mary's father, it is clear that Joseph was his son-in-law. The assumption, therefore, that this relationship is here designated, comports with the facts of the case, or at least is not contradicted by them.

2. The words, *being as was supposed*, although immediately referable to the following words, *the son of Joseph*, yet indicate that the Evangelist had his eye on the real parentage of Jesus, first as being the Son of God (see Luke 1 : 35), and then of David, through the line of his maternal ancestry, which alone was true and real. It is as though he intended his readers mentally to supply in the next clause, the words, *but in reality* (according to the flesh) *the son of Heli*. If it be asked why Luke did not openly express this idea, by putting the name of Mary in place of Joseph, and writing, *which was the daughter of Heli*, the answer is furnished in the almost invariable usage of the ancients, especially the Jews, to reckon one's pedigree through the *paternal* rather than the *maternal* line. But unless Luke, after this reference to our Lord's supposed relationship to Joseph, passes over to his real ancestry, his genealogical table would be according to his own showing, one that was fictitious. The whole array of names back to Adam, would rest on that of one who

82 \*Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson,

83 Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Judah,

34 Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham,

see Ru. 4: 18, &c.; 1 Ch. 2: 10, &c.

was only the *reputed* father of our Lord. Matthew, whose design was to furnish legal evidence to the Jews that Jesus was the descendant of David by the paternal line, makes no such qualifying remark, as is here found in Luke, for it would have vitiated and rendered worthless the record. But Luke, whose object was to show his real rather than his legal ancestry, which with the Jews could only be reckoned in the paternal line, advertises us in the very outset, that Joseph was not our Lord's real father, and prepares us, therefore, to pass to Heli, with whom the male ancestry on his mother's side commences. This then is the sentiment which Luke's qualifying phrase, *being as was supposed*, gives to the passage: the reputed pedigree of Jesus was in the line of Joseph's ancestors, but his real pedigree was to be found in the line of Heli, to whom Joseph sustained the relation of son, if not by adoption, yet by his having married Mary, the daughter of Heli, and mother of Jesus.

8. We should expect a genealogy somewhere in the Gospels, which would verify to the very letter the prediction, that Christ was to be of the seed of David and of Abraham. The ancestry of Joseph, who was only his reputed father, would not answer this demand. It might be adduced in the way of legal proof to the Jew, that Jesus had this mark of the Messiahship, but does not satisfy the conditions of the prophecy,

\*which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,

85 Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala,

86 \*Which was the son of Cainan, which was the son of Arphaxad, \*which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noah, which was the son of Lamech,

y Ge. 11: 24, 26. s See Ge. 11: 12.  
a Ge. 5: 6, &c.; & 11: 10, &c.

that he was to be a real descendant of David. Now to fill this niche in the proof of our Lord's Messiahship, by tracing his true lineage back to David and Abraham, was doubtless the reason why Luke prepared and inserted his genealogical table.

4. The fact that Luke carries his record back to Adam, who was declared to be the *son of God*, shows clearly that it was designed to subserve a different purpose from that of Matthew, viz. to furnish a full and authentic register of the real ancestry of Jesus, back to Adam, who, as having no earthly father, was appropriately called *son of God*, and thus became the type of the second Adam, who was in the highest sense the Son of God.

We come then to the conclusion that Joseph was Heli's son, by the marriage of his daughter, and perhaps also by adoption, and that this genealogy of Luke was designed to furnish proof that our Lord "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." Romans 1: 3.

It is a well authenticated fact, that the Jews never disputed the real descent of Christ from David, until, in modern times, they were taught by infidels this mode of parrying the arguments of the Messiahship of Jesus.

In regard to the catalogue of names, it is most likely that Luke took his account from family records. This will account for the introduction of Cainan

37 Which was *the son of Mathusala*, which was *the son of Enoch*, which was *the son of Jared*, which was *the son of Maleleel*, which was *the son of Cainan*,

38 Which was *the son of Enos*, which was *the son of Seth*, which was *the son of Adam*, <sup>b</sup> which was *the son of God*.

<sup>b</sup> Gen. 5: 1, 2.

the son of Arphaxad, which is omitted in Gen. 11: 12, 13, probably for a similar reason that the names of three kings are omitted in Matthew's genealogy. See N. on Matt. 1: 1. As it regards the occurrence of the names Zorobabel and Salathiel in both records, we must not infer from this that they were the same persons; for in that case, as Salathiel, according to Matthew, was the son of Jeremiah by natural descent, he must have been called the son of Neri in Luke (v. 27), either from adoption or marriage. "In that case," as Dr. Robinson well remarks, "his connection with David through Nathan, as given by Luke, was not his own personal genealogy. It is difficult therefore to see why Luke, after tracing back the descent of Jesus to Salathiel, should abandon the true personal lineage in the royal line of kings, and turn aside again to a merely collateral and humbler line. If the mother of Jesus was in fact descended from the Zorobabel and Salathiel of Matthew, she, like them, was descended also from David through the royal line. Why rob her of this dignity, and ascribe to her only a descent through an inferior lineage?"

#### CHAPTER IV.

1-13. THE TEMPTATION. *Desert of Judea*. See Ns. on Matt. 4: 1-11; Mark 1: 12, 13. Luke's account of this transaction is the fullest, Mark's being comprised in two verses, and Matthew omitting several particulars noted by Luke.

1. *Being full of the Holy Ghost*. This

#### CHAPTER IV.

AND <sup>a</sup> Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and <sup>b</sup> was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And <sup>c</sup> in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

<sup>a</sup> Mat. 4: 1; Ma. 1: 12. <sup>b</sup> V. 14; ch. 2: 27.  
<sup>c</sup> Ex. 24: 23; 1 Kl. 19: 8.

is peculiar to Luke, and is to be referred to the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him after his baptism. See 3: 22. He was now fully prepared for his mission, introductory to which was to be that awful and mysterious conflict, in the wilderness, with the great adversary and tempter. *Returned from Jordan*, i. e. he left the immediate vicinity of the river. *By the Spirit*, i. e. the Holy Spirit. The words *Ghost* and *Spirit* are the same in the original.

2. *Being forty days, &c.* Were it not for the parallel passage in Mark 1: 13, I should be disposed, with Bengel, to construct and read thus: "he was led into the desert, and was there forty days," referring the time specified solely to his withdrawal from the sight of men. But, with Mark's account in view, I cannot avoid the conclusion, that to a greater or less extent, he was subject to the assaults of Satan, during his whole sojourn in the desert, but that, at the close, such fierce and unwonted temptations beset him, that it was as though the tempter had come to him for the first time. In this aspect Matthew presents the transaction, ignoring the assaults made upon our Lord's integrity during the whole time he was in the wilderness, and referring only to what took place at the close of his abode there. *In those days, &c.* See N. on Matt. 4: 2. *He afterward hungered*. During the previous forty days, he had been in such a state of ecstasy, as to be insensible to hunger. But now he feels the want of food, and this the adversary seeks to make the occasion of his



3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, 'It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

5 And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them : for 'that is delivered unto me ; and to whomsoever I will, I give it.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me,

d De. 8: 3.

e John 12: 31; & 14: 30; Re. 18: 2, 7.

finning by the unlawful creation of food.

5. This temptation is the third and last in Matthew. That such is the true order we may justly argue, from the more open display of Satanic craft in this temptation, which leads Jesus to command him to be gone. After such a peremptory dismissal, we can hardly suppose, that he would immediately set about plying our Lord with a third temptation. *In a moment of time.* The word rendered *moment*, literally signifies a *prick, point*, and is tropically put for the minutest particle. When applied to time, it signifies an *instant, a moment*, not unlike our expression, *at a glance* of the eye. The suddenness of this prospect added much to the power of the temptation. At such a burst of dazzling splendor, the mind would be apt to be captivated, ere it was aware of the danger to which it was exposed.

6. *All this power*, i. e. the dominion and jurisdiction of the whole region exposed to our Lord's view. *The glory of them.* See N. on Matt. 4: 8. *For*

Satan : for 'it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 'And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence :

10 For 'it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee :

11 And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, 'It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him 'for a season.

f De. 6: 13; & 10: 20. g Mat. 4: 5. A Pa. 91: 11. i De. 6: 16. k John 14: 30; He. 4: 15.

*that* (viz. the power and glory of these kingdoms) *is delivered unto me.* This may be explained by Eph. 2: 2, where Satan is called "the prince of the power of the air," and by John 12: 31; 2 Cor. 4: 4, where he is denominated the god and prince of this world; yet this does not imply lawful power or dominion. God has delegated to him no such authority as he here claims, and in this, as in all his vain promises and assumptions, he shows himself to be the father of lies (John 8: 44).

8. Unless we adopt the order of Matthew, we cannot well see how Satan would have dared to approach our Lord with another temptation, after such a recognition of his true character and authoritative command to depart.

13. Bengel says that there is no temptation, against which believers may not, from these of our Lord, derive weapons, and learn the method of their use. *For a season*; literally, *until an opportune season, or a convenient time.* Such an occasion was furnished in the hour of darkness (22: 53), when our

14 ¶ And Jesus returned "in the power of the Spirit into "Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

l Mat. 4: 12; John 4: 43.  
m V. 1. n Ac. 10: 37.

Lord's "soul was sorrowful even unto death." See Matt. 26: 38; John 14: 30.

14. *Jesus returned, &c.* See N. on Matt. 4: 12. *In the power of the Spirit*, which had descended upon him after his baptism, and impelled by which he had gone into the wilderness. It was henceforth never to leave him. The expression, *power of the Spirit*, does not here signify that the divine energy was exerted in causing him to return to Galilee, but that he was so possessed of the Spirit, that all his words and acts demonstrated its existence in him. *Into Galilee.* A considerable interval elapsed between the time of the temptation and this visit to Galilee, in reference to which see N. on Matt. 4: 12. *There went out a fame, &c.* His mode of teaching, and the spirituality of his doctrines, excited the attention of men. The report also of the things he did at the feast (John 4: 45) had found its way into Galilee, and spread rapidly and extensively around. Together with this came up the remembrance of his miracle performed in Cana, on a previous visit to this region (John 2: 1-12). All these things had a wonderful effect upon the people, and served to draw their attention to this new spiritual teacher who had come among them. Alford refers this fame of his doings also to what he did at Capernaum; but the healing of the nobleman's son (John 4: 46-54) took place after this, and the fame to which reference is made, was evidently what had preceded his return to Galilee.

15. *And he taught; literally, he himself taught.* The idea is, that not only the general report alluded to in v. 14, gave him publicity, but he made himself still more known by his addresses in their synagogues. *Being glorified of*  
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15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

16 And he came to "Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, "he went

o Mat. 2: 23; & 13: 54; Ma. 6: 1.  
p Ac. 13: 14; & 17: 2.

*all*, i. e. being in high estimation with all. They were in that state of wonder and excitement, which would naturally attend the first appearance and preaching of so remarkable a person.

16-31. **JESUS IS REJECTED AT NAZARETH, AND TAKES UP HIS ABODE AT CAPERNAUM.** The account of this incident at Nazareth, is found only in Luke, although it is doubtless alluded to in Matt. 4: 13-16. Alford refers this visit to Nazareth, to one made at a later period in our Lord's ministry. But see N. on Matt. 4: 13. Before this incident at Nazareth, is to be placed the healing of the nobleman's son at Capernaum (John 4: 46-54).

16. *Where he had been brought up.* When we consider that our Lord had passed nearly or quite twenty-eight years of a blameless life in Nazareth, we see how highly exasperated they must have become at the truth, to treat him as they did on the occasion of this visit. *As his custom was.* The construction of the original is such, as to refer this clause solely to his habit of attending the synagogue worship on the Sabbath. At the same time we may infer that he made it his practice, at least after his entrance upon his public ministry, to read and expound the word of God on such occasions. *Stood up for to read* (see N. on Matt. 4: 23). It appears from this that the service of reading in the synagogue, was a voluntary one. This however does not forbid the idea, that persons were sometimes selected beforehand to perform this duty. In the present instance, our Lord expressed his readiness to read by standing up, which posture he maintained while reading. Dr. Jahn says, that the person whose duty it was to read, placed upon his head, as is done at the present day, a

into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet *Essias*. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

covering called Tallith, to which Paul alludes 2 Cor. 3:15.

17. *Then was delivered, &c.* The book of the Old Testament to be read, was selected by the ruler of the synagogue, but the particular portion was left to the choice of the reader. In the present instance, the prophecy of Isaiah was assigned, as the portion out of which the selection was to be made; and our Lord, on opening the book thus presented to him, turned to the passage here referred to. The word rendered *book*, is not the word in the original thus translated in 3:4, but one, whose usual signification is a *scroll, volume*, while there the word refers to the prophecy or contents of the book. *When he had opened* (literally, *unrolled*) the *book*, i. e. the volume. In ancient times, books composed of flexible materials which would permit it, were rolled upon a stick, from which it was unrolled around another of equal size. As the reader advanced he unrolled from the one to the other, until when he had finished reading the book, it was all rolled around the other cylinder. It was then rolled off again upon the first stick, and was ready for a second perusal when desired. If any particular place was to be read, the reader unrolled the scroll, until he came to the particular passage which he wished to read. *He found, &c.* Some erroneously refer this to mere chance, as he unrolled the book. But that he had a design in reading this Messianic prophecy, is very evident. The word *found* has here no other sense, than that he looked for and found the passage which he had intended to read on this occasion.

18. *The Spirit of the Lord, &c.* This passage is found in Isa. 61:1, 2, and

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon 'me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and re-

g Isa. 61:1.

is almost in the exact words of the original, the clause, *to set at liberty them which are bruised*, being added apparently from Isa. 58:6. This prophecy, acknowledged by every Jew to be Messianic, set forth in the clearest terms the spiritual nature of the Messiah's office, and hence was selected by Jesus to show its exact fulfilment in himself. He read from the Hebrew, but as Luke wrote his Gospel for Gentile readers, he quoted it as it stands in the Septuagint. *The Spirit of the Lord.* In the application of the prophecy to Jesus, this refers to the descent of the Spirit upon him at his baptism, under the power of whose influence he had come into Galilee (v. 14), to perform the very works here predicted, as those for which the Messiah was to be anointed or consecrated. Here then the prophecy had its perfect fulfilment in him. *Because* (or *inasmuch as*) refers to what follows, as proof of the indwelling of the Spirit in the Messiah. *Poor*, i. e. the spiritually poor. The implication is by no means necessary, that they felt their need of a Saviour. Hence the word *poor* is here substituted for *meek* in the original, which refers primarily to those oppressed and afflicted by their long captivity in Babylon. Some expositors restrict the word *poor*, to those in the humbler walks of life. But while it is true that the trophies of redeeming grace are gathered in the main from this class (see 1 Cor. 1:26-29), yet the offers of salvation, to which special reference is here had, are made to persons in every condition of life. *To heal the brokenhearted* (or *the contrite*) i. e. to bestow upon those who are bowed down under the burden of sin, and mourn over their lost condition, forgiveness and peace. *To preach deliver-*

covering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

*ance to the captives.* The imagery is drawn from the Babylonish captivity, but reference is had to those who are in bondage to sin, the deliverance being a spiritual one. This is clear from the whole context. *And recovering of sight to the blind.* The language is still drawn from the captivity above referred to. A common practice was to put out the eyes of such captives, as were of a rank or condition to excite future alarm, should they ever obtain their liberty. See Judg. 16 : 21 ; 2 Kings 25 : 7. Hence some have thought this to be a free translation of the clause in the original prophecy, "the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Others refer this clause to Isa. 35 : 5. In which of these ways, the variation in Luke from the original in Isaiah is best accounted for, is somewhat doubtful. The former is the more consonant with the principles of sound interpretation. We cannot well suppose that our Lord in reading, would not strictly adhere to the original, nor that Luke would represent him as reading what he did not actually read. That the clause is to be taken in a spiritual sense, is beyond a doubt. It is true that our Lord healed many who were physically blind, but it was to open the eyes of men to their lost condition by nature, and their need of a Saviour, that his labors were chiefly directed. See John 9 : 39. *To set at liberty, &c.* This seems to have been quoted from 58 : 6, for the sake of strengthening the idea contained in the clause, *to preach deliverance to the captive.* Our Lord may have turned to that passage as he read, or quoted it in the hearing of his auditors from memory. In the original prophecy, reference is had to those in a state of hopeless and cruel servitude, and who were to be introduced to freedom. The words *that are bruised*, refer to the cruel treat-

20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

ment, which they had experienced from their masters and oppressors. So the slaves of sin, when brought into the glorious liberty of the Gospel, and made freemen in Christ, will often carry through life the marks of their cruel servitude, in minds enfeebled by vice and sensual indulgence, and bodies deprived of full health and vigor by long-indulged habits of sin.

19. *To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* The original refers to the year of jubilee, when all who were in a state of servitude, were permitted to return home, and receive anew the inheritance, which for a season had been alienated from them. So the trumpet of the gospel was to proclaim universal deliverance to those in spiritual bondage, and a restoration of all things to their primeval order and harmony. *Acceptable year of the Lord*, i. e. a time when God is ready and willing to hear. This verse is a comprehensive summary of the preceding one, and both together unfold fully the great idea of the gospel of salvation.

20. *Closed the book*, i. e. rolled it up (see N. on v. 17). There was a calm and quiet dignity in his manner, highly befitting the place and occasion. *Minister.* This was one of the servants of the synagogue, whose business it was to carry the Book of the Law to the reader, and to receive it from him as in the present instance. His duties in other respects, were much like those of our sextons. *And sat down.* There was nothing unusual in this, for persons in those times sat while teaching. But there was something in his manner or tone of voice, which riveted the attention of the people, and caused every eye to be fixed upon him. The verb *were fastened* literally means, *were earnestly directed*, from a word signifying *to stretch*, and hence *to be intent upon*.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

22 And all bare him witness,  
Fr. Ps. 45: 2; Mat. 13: 54; Ma. 6: 2; ch. 2: 47.

21. *Began to say, &c.* It is probable that our Lord delivered, on this occasion, quite an extended discourse, of which the great theme is here given, viz. the fulfilment at that time of the prediction, which he had just read in their hearing. It seems to have been customary, in the time of Christ, for the one who read the Scriptures, to address the people from that portion which he had read, or any other appropriate selection. Any person however of suitable mental attainments, was at liberty to address the assembly. See Matt. 4: 23; Acts 13: 5, 15; 15: 21. *This day.* At this very time and occasion. They could be at no loss to understand his meaning, when he thus positively declared, that on that very day this great prophecy had been fulfilled. The prediction was declared to have direct and primary reference to the very preaching, to which they were then listening. It was fulfilled in their hearing. The very gospel referred to by the prophet, was then being preached to them by the One, who was anointed of God's Spirit for that purpose. Thus our Lord, in no ambiguous language, declared himself to his fellow-townsmen to be the Messiah. It was this which drew from them the contemptuous inquiry, made in the next verse. It may be remarked here, that the people passed through several stages or grades of feeling, before they reached that state of maddened fury, which could be satisfied with nothing short of his death. At first they wonder at the sweetness and grace, with which he interpreted that beautiful prediction of Isaiah. Then as the truth and justice of his Messianic claim were pressed home to their conscience, their wonder is succeeded by open contempt, which by another touch of the spear of truth (vs. 25-27), is transformed into the most furious rage.

and 'wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is 'not this Joseph's son?

John 6: 42.

22. *All who listened to his discourse. Bare him witness, i. e.* gave a favorable testimony to the subject and manner of his discourse. It was not one abounding in false reasonings, or unfounded assumptions. It bore the impress of truth. No fallacy of argument or erroneous statement, could be detected in the whole discourse. *Wondered, i. e.* listened with admiration and wonder, for, as Bengel remarks, the idea of approbation and praise is implied in the verb. *Gracious words or words of grace.* This may be taken in an evangelical sense, or as a tribute of admiration to the beauty and cogency of reasoning manifested in his discourse. The latter I take to be the true sense, as they were too blinded to see the depth of grace and salvation, which we find in the words here spoken by our Lord. *Which proceeded, &c.* An oriental expression for the utterance of a grave and earnest discourse. We may gather from this, that our Lord's address was of some considerable length. *And they said, &c.* Now their wonder and admiration are beginning to yield to a feeling of contempt for his pretensions. *Is not this Joseph's son?* Can one in such low condition of life, presume to be the great and long-expected Messiah? It is probable that this question was not put audibly, until near the close of his discourse, when the argument from the prophecy, that he was the Messiah, was developed, and his claims to this high honor fully substantiated. Then the low murmurs of disapprobation, with which his discourse was received, as it approached the application of the prophecy to himself, gave place to the most open expressions of contempt, that a person of such mean birth, whom they had known for years as a poor laborer, should declare himself to be a personage of such dignity as the Messiah.

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in 'Capernaum, do also here in thy 'country.

† Mat. 4: 13; & 11: 23.    u Mat. 13: 54; Ma. 6: 1.

23. *He said unto them.* The language of reproof with which he now addresses them, shows that their contemptuous allusion to his low birth had reached his ears. *Surely; literally, at all events, at any rate.* In Acts 28: 4, our version has for the same word, *no doubt*. Our Lord knew from the state of their mind, that such a demand would be made of him, as is here referred to. He anticipates the demand, and thus shows that he well knew what was in their mind. *This proverb; literally, parable.* The word is used of any discourse or saying, which has an obscure or deep meaning. *Physician, heal thyself; i. e. cure yourself before you undertake the cure of others.* Perform such miracles in sight of your fellow-townsmen, as will satisfy them of the justness of your claims to the Messiahship, before you seek to convince the nation of the truth of your pretensions. Olshausen takes this to be the sense: "Deliver yourself from poverty. Raise yourself from obscurity." But the following context clearly makes this proverb to be a demand upon him, to display his miraculous powers in the sight of his fellow-townsmen, and I cannot think, therefore, that here is to be found any allusion to his low birth or station in life. The implication is, that if he succeeded by some miraculous display, such as they heard he had made at Capernaum, in convincing them of his claims, he might then hope to convince others. These words were substantially repeated, while he hung upon the cross (23: 37; Matt. 27: 40; Mark 15: 30), but then with a direct and personal application. *Whatsoever we have heard, &c.* This explains and applies the preceding proverb. *Done in Capernaum.* If, as Alford thinks, this visit to Nazareth took place, at a later

24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No "prophet is accepted in his own country.

25 But I tell you of a truth, 'many widows were in Israel in

u Mat. 13: 57; Ma. 6: 4; John 4: 44.  
y 1 Kl. 17: 9; & 18: 1; Ja. 5: 17.

date than most expositors assign it (see N. on Matt. 4: 13), a great number of miracles had been wrought in and about Capernaum. But if we are right in referring it to the time when Jesus departed into Galilee, after John's imprisonment (see Matt. 4: 12; Mark 1: 14), even then he had healed the nobleman's son (John 4: 46-54), and doubtless performed other cures not mentioned. *Country, i. e. paternal town, native place.* Why it was that Jesus performed no miracles at Nazareth during this visit, may be conjectured from the reason given for his performance of so few, at a subsequent visit (see Matt. 3: 54-58; Mark 6: 1-6).

24. *Verily I say unto you.* On this formula of asseveration, see N. on Matt. 5: 18. *No prophet is accepted (i. e. approved, acceptable) in his own country.* A general truth is here taught, so plain and of such universal experience, as to require no elucidation. The proverb was repeated, with a slight variation, on his subsequent visit to Nazareth. See N. on Matt. 13: 57.

25. *Of a truth (i. e. in truth, truly)* gives emphasis here to the declaration which follows. *Many widows, &c.* Our Lord illustrates his line of conduct, by adducing two examples drawn from the greatest of Hebrew prophets. The sentiment is, that if it did not derogate from the divine authority of these prophets, that they passed by their own countrymen, and wrought the miracles referred to among the heathen, it ought not to be objected to his Messianic claims, that he had wrought no miracles in his native town. The Israelites had as good ground to reproach these eminent prophets for passing them by, as the Nazarites had to reproach him in the manner they had done. It was

the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a

the pungent truth conveyed in this reference to Elijah and Elisha, and the implication that the Nazarites were chargeable with the unbelief, which characterized Israel in the days of those prophets, that roused the people to such rage, that they attempted to put him to death, without even the formality of a trial. *Three years and six months.* So James 5: 17. We find, however, in 1 Kings 18: 1, that it was in the third year, that Elijah was commanded to show himself to Ahab with the promise of rain. Olshausen follows Bensen in computing the time, as given in 1 Kings 18: 1, from the flight of Elijah (1 Kings 17: 9). The expression *three years* in 1 Kings 17: 1, would seem to indicate a longer period than that spoken of in 18: 1, and I cannot but think, that the words in the *third year*, in the latter reference, look to the flight of Elijah, rather than to the commencement of the drought, which must have been a year or more previous. See 1 Kings 17: 3-7. Webster and Wilkinson seek to remove the discrepancy thus: "As rain fell in Judea at two stated seasons, in October and April, the six months preceding the time when the rain ceased, are included in the one statement, but omitted in the other." This explanation is less satisfactory, since the drought would naturally be dated from the time when it first began to be felt, which would certainly not be immediately after the usual semi-annual rain. *When; better, so that, as the famine resulted from the drought. Great famine.* So great and dreadful was this famine, that it seems to have been long remembered as a national calamity. *All the land.* The famine extended north, as far certainly as Sarepta, a town on the coast, between Tyre and Sidon (see N. on v. 26). How far south it reached, we are not

city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was

2 Kt. 5: 14.

informed, but it was probably felt throughout all Palestine.

26. *Unto none of them, &c.* Our Lord expressly affirms here what we might infer from the silence of the Old Testament, that no widows were visited and aided by Elijah, except the one in Sarepta. *Save unto Sarepta;* better and more literal, *but only into Sarepta* (a city) *of Sidon, unto a widow woman.* The incident is found in 1 Kings 17: 8-24. Our Lord made no special mention of the miracles performed by Elijah for this woman, as they were well known to his hearers. Our Lord's visit to this same region, and gracious acceptance of the Syro-Phenician (Matt. 15: 21-28; Mark 7: 24-30) naturally recur to the reader, on the mention of this incident in Elijah's history. *Sarepta*, regarded by Thomson (Land and Book, Vol. II., p. 232) as the modern Sarafend. Its ruins have been frequently dug over for stone to build the barracks at Beirût, and the masses of rubbish, broken columns, marble slabs, sarcophagi and other relics, indicate that it was a flourishing and wealthy city.

27. *Many lepers.* On the prevalence and nature of this disease, see N. on Matt. 8: 2. *Eliseus*, i. e. Elisha, the name in the New Testament conforming to the Greek orthography. *Was cleansed.* See N. on Matt. 8: 2 (end).

Since that Note was written, we have had further evidence furnished us of the dreadful nature of this disease, by that accurate eye-witness of scenes and incidents in the Holy Land, Dr. Thomson. From his work, "The Land and Book," we make the following extract:

"There is nothing in the entire range of human phenomena, which illustrates so impressively the divine power of the Redeemer, and the nature and extent of his mercy on man's behalf, as this leprosy. It is feared as contagious,

cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

it is certainly and inevitably hereditary, it is loathsome and polluting, its victim is shunned by all as unclean, it is most deceitful in its action. New-born children of leprous parents are often as pretty and as healthy in appearance as any, but by-and-by its presence and workings become visible, in some of the signs described in the 13th chapter of Leviticus. The 'scab' comes on by degrees in different parts of the body, the hair falls off from the head and eyebrows, the nails loosen, decay and drop off, joint after joint of the fingers and toes shrink up, and slowly fall away, the gums are absorbed, and the teeth disappear. The nose, the eyes, the tongue, and the palate are slowly consumed, and finally the wretched victim sinks into the earth and disappears, while medicine has no power to stay the ravages of this fell disease, or even to mitigate sensibly its tortures. To my mind, there is no conceivable manifestation of divine power more triumphantly confirmatory of Christ's divinity, than the cleansing of a leper with a word. When looking at the helpless, eyeless, tongueless wrecks of humanity, the unbelieving question starts unbidden, Is it possible that they can be restored? Yes, it is more than possible. It has been accomplished again and again by the mere volition of Him, who spake, and it was done. And He who can cleanse the leper can raise the dead, and can also forgive sins and save the soul. I ask no other evidence of the fact."

The length of this extract needs no other apology, than its graphic description of this terrible and loathsome disease, from which, by the mercy of God, we are exempt in this western world.

28. The inference from these examples, that the people of Nazareth had rendered themselves unworthy of the

29. And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

miraculous display they wished him to make, so exasperated them, that they proceeded to lay violent hands upon him in the very synagogue. Once or twice only in his whole ministry, previous to the week of his passion, was he treated with such rude violence. Olshausen remarks, that "they drove out their prophet, and thus made the words of Jesus true." *All they in the synagogue.* This does not forbid the belief that there may have been some that believed in Him, who had that day declared himself to be the Messiah. The expression indicates that the great majority united in this act of violence.

29. *Rose up* in tumultuous excitement. *Thrust him out*, i. e. seized and dragged him out of the city. Perhaps their first intention was only to expel him from the town. But one act of violence usually begets another. Their rage waxed more and more fierce, as they were hurrying him along, until they determined to take his life. For this purpose they led him to the brow or steep precipice of the hill, on which their town was built, with the intention of casting him down headlong. This cliff has been supposed to be the one situated about two miles from the town, overlooking the plain of Esdraelon, and called the Mount of Precipitation. But the distance of this cliff from the town, has always been an objection to this view, which no monkish artifice has been able to satisfactorily remove. Dr. Robinson says, that in the south-west part of the town is a hill, which breaks off in a perpendicular precipice, forty or fifty feet in height. This, or some one of the several precipices in that vicinity, he suggests as the cliff down which they were intending to throw Jesus. *Whereon the city was built.* The cliff belonged to the range of hills on which Nazareth was built, and was doubtless quite near the town.



30 But he, 'passing through the midst of them, went his way,

31 ¶ And 'came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: 'for his word was with power.

33 'And in the synagogue there

a John 8: 59; & 10: 39. b Mat. 4: 13; Ma. 1: 21. c Mat. 6: 23, 29; Tit. 2: 15. d Ma. 1: 23.

30. It is thought by some, that as they had required a miracle, one was here vouchsafed to them, but in a manner they little foresaw. But miracles in the way of self-preservation, seem never to have been wrought by Christ or his apostles (see N. on Matt. 4: 3). I prefer therefore the view of those, who refer his escape to some diversity or distraction of movement in those who were hurrying him to the precipice, taking advantage of which, he passed through the midst of them, and thus escaped from their hands. It may be, however, that some gleam of the divinity within him flashed upon them, as upon those who were sent to take him in the garden (see John 18: 6), under the dread influence of which, they left him to pass on his way unharmed. A similar escape from the cruel rage of his enemies, is found in John 10: 18.

31. *Came down to Capernaum.* This town was situated on the borders of Lake Tiberias, and hence the way thither from Nazareth was descending. Dr. Thomson says that Capernaum was six hundred feet lower than the Mediterranean sea, and much lower therefore than Nazareth. In regard to Capernaum see N. on Matt. 4: 13. Thomson rejects the idea that Capernaum was in the plain of Gennesaret, and locates it at Tell Hâm, at the head of the lake, and a short distance west of the entrance of the Jordan. If this is so, and I see no good reason to doubt it on such good authority as that of Dr. Thomson, it will help to explain some movements of our Lord and his disciples, that have hitherto been com-

was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice,

34 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? 'I know thee who thou art; 'the Holy One of God.

35 And Jesus rebuked him,

e V. 41. f Pa. 16: 10; Da. 9: 24; ch. 1: 35.

paratively inexplicable. *And taught* (literally, *was teaching*) *them on the Sabbath days.* He availed himself of the opportunity, when the people assembled for synagogue worship, of teaching and instructing them in the things pertaining to the kingdom which he was about to establish. He doubtless seized upon every occasion to preach to the people, but as yet no such crowds attended upon his ministry, as was soon after the case. From the incident related in 5: 1-11, we may infer the manner in which he spent much of his time.

32. *Were astonished.* See N. on Matt. 7: 28. *Doctrine.* Both the matter of his discourse, and the manner of his teaching. *For his word,* &c. See N. on Matt. 7: 29. *With power.* With authority, authoritatively. See N. on v. 34.

33-37. *THE HEALING OF A DEMONIAK IN THE SYNAGOGUE. Capernaum.* See N. on 1: 23-28. There is but a slight verbal difference between the account of this miracle, as given by Mark and Luke.

33. *In the synagogue* where he was preaching (see v. 31). *Spirit of an unclean devil.* Alford refers *spirit* to the influence, and *devil* to the personality of the possessing demon. On the subject of demoniacal possession, see N. on Matt. 4: 24. *Cried out.* The term refers to a specific act, and not to one of common occurrence.

34. This verse agrees verbatim with Mark 1: 24, on which see Note.

35. *Had thrown* (literally, *having thrown*) *him into the midst of the assembly.* In Mark: *had torn him*, i. e. had

saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

37 And the fame of him went

out into every place of the country round about.

38 And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left

*g* Mat. 8: 14; Ma. 1: 29.

thrown him into convulsions. From a comparison of both Evangelists, it appears that under the powerful influence of the demon, the man had thrown himself into the midst of the company, where he lay convulsed with spasms until dispossessed of the devil. See N. on Mark 1: 26. *And hurt him not*, i. e. inflicted upon him no serious injury, being restrained from doing this by the power of Jesus.

36. *What a word is this?* In Mark: *what new doctrine?* on which see Note. *With authority* (which admits of no question) *and power* (which nothing can resist). The former of these words denotes the possession of power, the latter its exercise. In 9: 1, they are again found in combination, but in reversed position.

37. *Fame*; literally, *an echo, sound*, referring here to the report of his miracles and teaching openly spread abroad among the people, as is the case with that which is the common topic of conversation. "The district rung with his fame." Webster and Wilkinson. The word is translated *sound*, in Acts 2: 2; Heb. 12: 19. *Went out*. The tense in the original refers to a continuance of the action. It was not a momentarily spread report, but one which was from day to day the subject of conversation. *Country round about* (Capernaum), i. e. Galilee.

38-41. THE HEALING OF PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER, AND MANY OTHERS. *Capernaum*. See Ns. on Matt. 8: 14-17; Mark 1: 29-34. Of the three narratives, those of Mark and Luke are of about equal fullness, and have a very

slight verbal difference. Matthew's account is more brief, but contains a reference to Isa. 53: 4, where the Messiah is predicted, as bearing the infirmities and sicknesses of men.

38. *He arose out*. A concise expression for *he arose and went out*. As soon as he had arisen from his sitting posture as a teacher, he left the synagogue. *And entered*. Mark: *and forthwith they entered*. *Simon's house*, in Mark is *the house of Simon and Andrew*. These brothers were partners in the fishing business (Matt. 4: 18; Mark 1: 16), and appear to have lived together in the same house. *A great fever*, as we say, *a high or raging fever*. *They besought him*, &c. In Mark: *they tell him of her* (condition). Jesus waited for this manifestation of their faith, before he approached her bedside to exert his healing power. It is from such incidents as these, that we learn how to evoke his powerful and gracious aid in behalf of those debased with sin, and in imminent danger of eternal death.

39. *He stood over her*. Mark: *he took her by the hand*. The two accounts taken together harmonize and complete the narrative. Our Lord came to her bedside, and as he stood over her, according to his usual custom, he took her by the hand, in order by personal contact to show the connection between the cure and his own agency. See N. on Matt. 8: 3. *Rebuked the fever*. The fever is here addressed, as though it were a conscious agent. Such instances of personification are often found, in the Bible and other ancient writings. At the command of Jesus, the violence

her : and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

40 'Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him ; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

41 'And devils also came out

A Mat. 8 : 16 ; Ma. 1 : 32.  
f Ma. 1 : 34 ; & 8 : 11.

of the disease was immediately checked, and an instantaneous cure effected. As recovery from a fever is always slow, the suddenness of the cure showed the reality of the miracle. Its completeness is seen from the active ministration to the company, of one who, a few moments previous, was suffering from a high and raging fever.

40, 41. See Na. on Matt. 8 : 16, 17. *When the sun was setting.* Mark's form of expression, *when the sun was set*, leaves it indefinite, how long it had gone down. But Luke informs us that, while the sun was yet setting, they brought the sick to be healed. Mark shows that the Jewish sabbath had completely ended. The sun had fully gone down. Luke represents the people, as so eager to avail themselves of his healing power, that they seize upon the first moment, after the expiration of holy time, to bring their sick to him. Thus do the evangelists, by slight verbal variations, add to the completeness of the narrative taken as a whole, and leave scarcely any thing to be desired by the reader, for the full understanding of the subject. *Sick with divers diseases.* Mark adds : *and them that were possessed with devils.* This is introduced by Luke in the next verse. Matthew's account begins with a reference to those possessed with devils, and introduces the sick to the notice of the reader in the words, *and healed all that were sick.* Such a comparison proves incontestably, that the evangelists were independent writers. *And he laid his hands, &c.* He did not depart from his usual custom, of connecting the exercise of his power

of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And 'he rebuking *them*, suffered them not to speak : for they knew that he was Christ.

42 'And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place : and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed

f Ma. 1 : 25, 34 ; Va. 24, 25.  
i Ma. 1 : 35.

with some external act, such as laying on his hands or touching each person. He doubtless accompanied the act, by some kind word of encouragement or gentle admonition, as their case might individually require.

41. *And devils also.* The special mention of these demons shows conclusively, that they were not diseases personified, as they have been asserted to be by some, who deny the reality of demoniacal possession. See N. on Matt. 4 : 24. *Came out of many* at his command. See 4 : 36. *Crying out.* See N. on Mark 1 : 26. *Thou art the Christ.* On the indubitable evidence, which this knowledge of our Lord's true character furnishes of the reality of demoniacal possessions, see N. on Matt. 8 : 29. *Suffered them not to speak,* i. e. make known his Messiahship. The reason why our Lord rejected their testimony, is given in N. on Mark 1 : 34. To the prudential reasons there assigned, we may add, that Jesus would not be dependent upon these demons for testimony as to his Messiahship. The testimony upon which he relied in proof of his claims, is given in John 5 : 31-47 ; 8 : 13-19.

42-44. JESUS PREACHES THROUGHOUT GALILEE. See Na. on Mark 1 : 35-39. Mark as usual is more circumstantial, as, for example, Luke's "and when it was day," is in Mark, "and in the morning, rising up a great while before day." The agreement between the two evangelists, in this portion, is in sense rather than in words.

42. *Into a desert place* (and there prayed. Mark). The same word is translated *solitary place*, in Mark. It

him, that he should not depart from them.

43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

see Ma. 1: 29.

would have been better, if here and elsewhere our translators had rendered the original by the same English word. Many apparent discrepancies and variations would have been thereby avoided, and if the evangelists, inspired as they were of God to indite their narratives, used the same term to express the same idea, it is not well for any translator to seek to improve on this feature, by employing different words in the translation. The solitary place here referred to, is not to be understood of a large desert, as when the desert of Judea or of Sinai is spoken of, but of an uncultivated and sparsely inhabited tract, whither one could repair for private meditation and prayer. *The people sought him.* It appears from Mark, that Simon and his party followed Jesus, and, having found him, reported that all the people were seeking him. Luke merges this latter clause in the general declaration, that *the people were seeking him*. There is strict unity of sense, in this diversity of narration. *And came unto him*; literally, *even as far as unto him*, the idea being that they did not desist to seek him, until they found him, and came into his personal presence. This denotes the eagerness and determined perseverance with which they sought him, and prepares the way for the following words, *and stayed* (i. e. detained) *him*, which are peculiar to Luke, but are implied in the corresponding portion of Mark. The clause *and stayed him*, &c. may be literally rendered, *and strove to prevent* (by the force of the Greek imperfect) *his departure from them*.

43. *I must preach.* The ground of this moral necessity is contained in the following clause, *for therefore am I sent*, on which see N. on Mark 1: 38. *Preach the kingdom of God*, i. e. proclaim the

44 "And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

#### CHAPTER V.

AND "it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him  
a Mat. 4: 18; Ma. 1: 16.

glad tidings respecting the kingdom of grace, which God was about to establish on the earth. *Other cities*, i. e. other in respect to Capernaum, whose inhabitants were now importuning him to prolong his stay among them. *Therefore*, i. e. to make a general proclamation of the gospel. *Am I sent.* Christ, as Son and Redeemer of men, was sent of the Father into this world (John 3: 17; 6: 29, 38-40; 10: 36); but this does not imply essential subordination, or that in his divine nature he is not equal with the Father.

44. *In the synagogues* throughout the country of Galilee. He did not yield to their solicitations to return to Capernaum.

#### CHAPTER V.

1-11. THE CALL OF PETER AND ANDREW, AND OF JAMES AND JOHN. THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES. *Near Capernaum.* See Ns. on Matt. 4: 18-22; Mark 1: 16-20. This portion of Luke's gospel is to be placed between the 81st and 82d verses of chap. IV. Luke often departs from the regular order of events, anticipating some things and passing by others. Alford, and Webster and Wilkinson concur in the opinion, that this call of Peter and his friends is different from the one recorded in Matt. 4: 18; Mark 1: 16-20. The principal reason advanced by the last-mentioned expositors, is the scanty detail in Matthew and Mark, particularly in their omission of his preaching from the ship, and substituting in the stead thereof, his walking along the shore, and their making no allusion to the miracle performed on this occasion. The order of events is also advanced as an objection, Luke placing the call after the events, which took place at Capernaum (4: 31-44; Mark 1: 21-39),

to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

2 And saw two ships standing

by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

and Mark, *before* them. But no argument can be adduced from the scantiness of detail in Matthew and Mark, as the evangelists are continually found to vary, in the comparative fulness with which they describe the same event. Nor is there any essential disagreement between their respective accounts of the call. All concur that it was at the sea of Galilee, where the call was made. There is nothing to prevent our so interpreting Matthew and Mark's *walking by the sea of Galilee*, as to harmonize it with what may be implied in v. 12 of Luke, where their forsaking all and following Christ, was after they had brought the ships to shore, and in obedience to the command there given, *Follow me*. Nothing is more natural than to suppose that, while our Lord was conversing with Peter and Andrew, the brethren James and John had brought their ship to its usual place of anchorage, a little farther on, and were engaged in mending their nets, which doubtless had been also broken by the great draught of fishes (v. 6), when Jesus having called Peter and Andrew, and attended by them, walked on and repeated the call, in the same words, to these other brethren. As to the relative position of this call in Mark and Luke, to the events which took place at Capernaum, no argument either way can be deduced therefrom, as each writer follows his own order, and often without any apparent reason mingling up the details, so that chronological order is out of the question. I cannot but think, therefore, that one and the same call is referred to by all the evangelists, Luke, however, being much the most circumstantial in his narrative.

To the question, why this call should not be regarded as put in its proper order in Luke, it may be replied, that the last-verse of the preceding chapter in Luke, leaves our Lord preaching up and down in the synagogues of Galilee, whereas this call took place at Caper-

naum, and is connected with his ministrations there, as is evident from vs. 1-4. There is no place where this can be so properly inserted, therefore, as immediately after 4:31, and Matt. 4: 13-16.

1. *As the people pressed, &c.* Here we have a brief view of the results of his ministrations in Capernaum, after his expulsion from Nazareth (4:30). The people attended his ministry in such throngs, that he seems to have withdrawn himself for temporary rest, or some other reason, to the quiet shore of the lake. Thither they also followed, and in such numbers, that the only method by which he could address them, so that all could hear, and himself not be incommoded by the crowds around him, was to go on board a fisherman's boat, and shove a little from the land, and thus address the people. *He stood by the lake.* In Matthew and Mark, he is said to have been walking along the shore. There is no contradiction in the statements. *Gennesaret* was the more ancient name of the lake, taken from a small territory or plain of that name, on its western borders. See Numb. 34: 11; Josh. 19: 35, where, after the Hebrew orthography, it is called Chinnereth. The plain of Gennesaret, which Thomson locates a little more than half way from Tiberias to Capernaum, on the western side of the lake, is about thirty furlongs in length, and not quite twenty in breadth. Its fertility, of which Josephus boasted, has now all disappeared. "Gennesaret is now preëminently fruitful in thorns." Thomson, vol. i. p. 537.

2. *Standing*, i. e. stationed, at anchor. These fishing-smacks were so small, that they were brought up to the shore, or lay alongside temporary wharves. *By the lake*, i. e. near the shore of the lake. *But the fishermen, &c.* This refers to James and John (see vs. 7, 10), who are not yet mentioned by name, and are therefore con-

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

sidered as strangers to the reader. *Were gone out of them* for the purpose denoted in the following clause, *were washing their nets*. This cleansing process has to be frequently gone through, to keep the twine free from the filth of the fish, which, if suffered to dry on, would render the net less flexible and easy of working. The tense of the original verb, simply denotes the act for which they had left their boats, leaving it wholly undetermined, whether they had finished washing the nets, or were then engaged in the act, or had yet commenced it.

3. *And he entered into* (literally, *having gone on board*) *one of the ships*, in order to avoid the pressure of the people, who were crowding around him. *Which was Simon's*. The other ship belonged to James and John, or perhaps to their father Zebedee. See Matt. 4 : 21 ; Mark 1 : 20. If our Lord lodged with Peter at Capernaum, he would naturally make use of his ship on this occasion. Some find in this the precedence given to Peter, which afterwards was so frequently done by our Lord and his apostles. *Prayed him*, i. e. requested him. See 7 : 36 ; 14 : 32 ; John 4 : 31. The language comports with the relation between the parties, which was not yet one of familiarity. It may be well here to revert to the previous acquaintance of Peter with our Lord, in order that we may the better understand the narrative here, so far as it affects their mutual relations. He had been introduced to Jesus, on the banks of the Jordan (John 1 : 42), after which he spent some time in his company, and attended on his ministry. See John 2 : 2, 12 ; 3 : 22 ; 4 : 2, 27, 31. In all the places here cited, Peter may be supposed to have been included in the number of our Lord's disciples. See N. on Matt. 4 :

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, 'Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.'

5 And Simon answering said

3 John 21 : 6.

18. If now we suppose Jesus to have been Peter's guest in Capernaum, we shall see that they were well acquainted, although not to that degree of intimacy, which characterized their relations, after Peter entered fully upon his discipleship. *Would thrust out*. As we would say *put out*. Webster and Wilkinson err in finding the sense *again* in the composition of the verb, the literal meaning being *put out upon the sea*. The distance was but *little*, just so far as to enable him to be heard distinctly by those on shore, and at the same time suffer no inconvenience from their pressing upon him. *Sat down*, the usual position of a teacher. See N. on 4 : 20 ; Matt. 5 : 1.

4. *When he had left speaking*. At the close of his discourse, he probably dismissed the people to their homes, as the following narrative indicates that he was alone with Peter and his fishermen. *Launch out*. The same verb translated *thrust out*, in v. 3. This verb is in the singular, referring to Peter ; the next verb, *let down*, is plural to include also the fishermen in the command. *Into the deep*, as opposed to the shallow water near the shore. *Your nets*. The plural pronoun refers to the fishermen employed in the service of Peter, who himself may be supposed to have taken his station as helmsman. *For a draught*. Peter's readiness to suspend his work, and give up his ship for the Master's use, having been tested and approved, he is now directed to resume his labors as a fisherman, with an implied promise of success. When we take into consideration the fruitless efforts of the previous night, and the fact that the day is a less favorable time for drawing a net than the night, we see that obedience to this command of our Lord, made no small draft upon Peter's faith.

unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the

other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

c 3 Sa. 6 : 9; 1 Kl 17 : 18.

5. *We have toiled, &c.* This is advanced as a reason why, in the ordinary course of things, the casting of the nets would be unsuccessful. *Nevertheless at thy command, &c.* The ready obedience of Peter to our Saviour's command, under such discouraging prospects of success, has often been reproduced in the faith and experience of multitudes since, who in like circumstances of hopeless effort, have notwithstanding yielded obedience to the divine command. However hopeless to the eye of sense may be the exercise of prescribed duties, yet the language of our hearts should be that of Peter, "at thy word I will let down the net." *At thy word* has the force of "is reliance upon thy word." The act was purely one of faith.

6. *Had this done*, i. e. cast the net as directed by Jesus. The use of means in the attainment of a divinely predicted end, are not to be overlooked. Peter and his companions threw out the net with as much care and skill, as on the preceding night, when they toiled without success. *Their net brake*, literally, *was breaking*, or *began to break*. Portions of it gave way, but although through the rents some fishes made their escape, yet those taken were sufficient to fill their own, and the boat of their partners to a sinking condition. At such a wondrous draught, Peter could not but be filled with amazement and awe.

7. *They beckoned*. They were either so far from the other ship, as to be unable to be heard, or were impressed with such awe of Jesus, that they dared not raise their voice to shout for help. *Their partners*, i. e. James and John,

as appears from v. 10. They had been associated as partners in the employment of fishermen, they were henceforth to be associated in that higher service of their divine Master, in which they were to become *fishers of men*. See v. 10; Matt. 4 : 19; Mark 1 : 17. *Filled both the ships*. The nets were not shore nets (i. e. such as were pulled to the shore by the ends), but those thrown. These were called *bag-nets* and *basket-nets*, and were used in deep water. Dr. Thomson says that he has seen them of almost every conceivable size and pattern, so as to enclose in a circle and to be pulled on board the vessel. *Began to sink*, i. e. were on the point of sinking under the great weight of the fish. Webster and Wilkinson hint at the remuneration which our Lord thus bestowed upon Peter, in whose house he lodged while at Capernaum.

8. *Saw it*, i. e. the immense draught of fishes. *He fell down, &c.* This was in accordance with the impulsive character of Peter. Instead of gazing with delight upon the fishes, with which the boats were filled, so as to sink well-nigh to the water's edge, he was so impressed with a sense of his unworthiness to stand in the presence of so superior a personage, that he prostrated himself at Jesus' knees, and humbly craved his immediate departure from the ship. Every reader of this simple and touching confession of unworthiness and sinfulness on the part of Peter, will recur to Job's self-loathing and abasement, when sensible of the presence of the Divine majesty (Job. 42 : 6). We are not to suppose from this, that Peter wished our Lord in reality to leave him.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken :

10 And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; 'from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, 'they forsook all, and followed him :

12 ¶ And it came to pass,

d Mat. 4 : 19; Ma. 1 : 17. e Mat. 4 : 20; & 19 : 27; Ma. 1 : 18; ch. 18 : 28. f Mat. 8 : 3; Ma. 1 : 40.

It was spoken at the moment, under a deep sense of his unworthiness to be in the presence of such a holy and exalted Being. Emotional language like this cannot be misunderstood.

9. *For he was astonished*; literally, *astonishment seized or took possession of him*. This idea of consternation must also be added to Peter's amazement. He may have been under the impression so common amongst the ancients, that no one could see God or any celestial personage and live (see N. on Matt. 17 : 6). This verse stands connected with the preceding, as denoting the reason why Peter thus prostrated himself. *All that were with him*, refers to those in Peter's ship, inasmuch as James and John are named in the next verse, as being affected with like astonishment. In this account of the miraculous draught, which, as has been remarked (N. on v. 1), is not mentioned by Matthew and Mark, no reference is made by name to Andrew, although he was with Peter at this time (see Matt. 4 : 18; Mark 1 : 16). This is to be accounted for in the fact, that Peter was the head one of the ship, and our Lord is represented as particularly addressing him. Luke's account, so far as particulars are concerned, ends with v. 11, where it is said that they (i. e. the brothers Peter and Andrew, together

when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy; who seeing Jesus fell on *his* face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

13 And he put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will : be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

14 'And he charged him to tell no man : but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, 'according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

g Mat. 8 : 4.  
h Lu. 14 : 4, 10, 21, 22.

with James and John) brought their ships to land, and then forsook all and followed him. Several other incidents are found in Matt. 4 : 19-22; Mark 1 : 17-20, to which, and my Notes thereon, the reader is referred.

12-16. *The healing of a leper. Galilee*. See Ns. on Matt. 8 : 2-4; Mark 1 : 40-45. There is a slight verbal difference between Luke and Mark's account of this incident, both being fuller than Matthew. This cleansing of the leper took place, while Jesus was making his first tour through Galilee (see Matt. 4 : 23-25), but in what place we are not informed.

12. *In a certain city*. This is peculiar to Luke, but imparts no definite information as to the place where the miracle was wrought. *Full of leprosy*. The disease was deep-seated and virulent. He was covered all over with it, and must have been a pitiable and loathsome object. See N. on 4 : 27. *Fell on his face*. In Mark, *kneeling down*; in Matthew, *worshipped*, i. e. did him reverence as a superior person. The same general act is referred to by all. What, at his first approach, was a simple inclination of reverence, became in his humble desire for help, a kneeling posture, and then prostration upon the earth.

14. *But go, &c.* The change from the



15 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him : 'and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

† Mat. 4 : 25; Ma. 8 : 7; John 6 : 2.

indirect to the direct discourse is very common in the ancient writings.

15. *But so much the more, &c.* It would seem that the greater his precaution against having this affair blazoned abroad, the more rapidly and extensively the news spread. This resulted, in part, at least, from the disobedience of the leper, who, although strictly charged to the contrary, as we are told in Mark (1 : 45), published his astonishing cure throughout the land. *Great multitudes came together, &c.* A very natural result of the publicity given to the miracle by the leper. The consequence was, that he was followed by such numbers, that had he entered into any city, he would have been immediately arrested as a seditious person.

16. *He withdrew—and prayed; literally, he was withdrawing himself and praying,* reference being had to his habits of secret devotion. See N. on Mark 1 : 45. The pronoun *he* is emphatic in the original, as though his conduct in withdrawing himself for prayer was strongly antithetic to that of the multitude, who came together to hear and be healed. While they were anxiously desirous of availing themselves of the benefits of his mission, he was seeking retirement to hold communion with his Father, and obtain strength for the great work he had to accomplish. This accounts for the apparent abruptness, with which this incident is introduced. It is as though he had broken away from the multitude, and retired by himself to seek rest and spiritual refreshment. Luke seems to have referred to the devotional habits of our Lord, much more frequently than the other evangelists. We have no doubt that he retired daily for the purpose of secret devotion, and when the labors of the day were so arduous and

16 <sup>a</sup> And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

17 ¶ And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and

† Mat. 14 : 23; Ma. 6 : 46.

continuous as to give him no time for this, he drew upon the hours of night, in order that the duty and privilege of prayer might not suffer interruption.

17-26. THE HEALING OF A PARALYTIC. *Capernaum.* See Ns. on Matt. 9 : 2-8; Mark 2 : 1-12. In the narrative of this miracle, Mark and Luke are much fuller than Matthew, who brings out only the principal features of the incident, while all that pertains to the effort made to get the sick man into the presence of Jesus is omitted. In this portion of the narrative, Luke is much the fullest.

17. *On a certain day, &c.* We learn from Mark, that the incident here related took place at Capernaum. *Was teaching.* "This was his employment that day. Miracles came in incidentally." Webster and Wilkinson. *Pharisees and doctors of the law.* The latter of these classes were the same as the scribes (v. 21), so often mentioned in connection with the Pharisees. The jealous hatred of those persons had already begun to be awakened, through the growing popularity of our Lord with the common people, and his bold and searching exposure of their vices and hypocrisy. *Sitting by,* as auditors and spectators of what he said and did. They sat, as persons of superior honor and dignity, while the people stood in his presence as he taught them. Frequent intimations of the superior respect, in which these scribes and doctors of the law were held by the common people, are found in the gospels. It was a principal means to the furtherance of their selfish aims, to inspire the people with an awe and veneration for their superior sanctity and high spiritual attainments. *Out of every town, &c.* These subtle and malignant enemies of our Lord, had come together from every

doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.

18 'And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him.

1 Mat. 9:2; Ma. 9:2.

part of the land, to watch and report his proceedings. As this was but a short time before our Saviour's second Passover (John 5:1-47), it has been thought that the chief priests at Jerusalem were desirous of finding some ground of accusation against him, in order to justify his apprehension and trial at the feast. They had doubtless heard of his doctrines and miracles, but sought for more certain and definite information, on which to base charges against him. Those who had come down to Galilee from Jerusalem, having been joined by persons of the same class in the inferior towns, now sat watching him, a large and formidable band of bitter, influential enemies, ready to seize upon any circumstance, which they might convert into a charge against him. Olshausen thinks that these persons did not come to Capernaum on account of Jesus. But in the absence of all proof to the contrary, we may conjecture this, both from the early opposition which these persons made to the claims and preaching of Jesus, and the particularity with which Luke introduces them on this occasion, showing that they were not casual and unconcerned spectators. The words *every town*, are not to be pressed further than to mean *from all parts*, in a general sense. The following clause, *and the power of the Lord, &c.*, is somewhat difficult of interpretation. Expositors are divided, whether *the Lord* is to be referred here to Jesus or to God. Those who adopt the latter view, do it on the general ground, that the article is wanting in the original, whereas, when the term is applied to Christ, it always takes the article. Such is the opinion of Meyer and Alford. But this would require the interpretation: *the power of the Lord was* [with Jesus] to heal them. This ellipsis is so harsh,

that most of our best commentators refer the word *Lord* to Jesus, on the ground that the ellipsis presents a more insuperable objection to referring it to Jehovah, than the absence of the article to the reference of it to our Saviour. Another difficulty presents itself in determining the persons to whom the pronoun *them* refers. The most natural antecedent would be the Pharisees and doctors of the law; but as the diseases here alluded to were physical and not spiritual, we cannot suppose the healing power of the Lord to have been exerted upon them, without absurdly including them all among those who were physically diseased. Some find the antecedent of the pronoun, in the latter clause of v. 15. But this is too remote a reference. It is better to refer the pronoun to the persons, implied in the words *he was teaching*, i. e. to such persons in his audience as stood in need of his healing power. Such an implied reference is by no means uncommon in the Greek classical writers. This would not exclude any one of the persons specially mentioned, from those to whom the pronoun refers, in case any of them had been afflicted with disease. The passage may then be interpreted: *the power of Jesus was* [operative] *to heal all who were diseased*. There was on this occasion an eminent display of his miraculous healing power, accompanying his presentation of the truth, and attesting to his divine character and mission.

18. *Behold men brought*; literally, *behold men bringing*, as though the act were passing before the eye of the writer. The verb is often to be mentally supplied, after the demonstrative particles, *lo, behold, &c.* *Was taken with a palsy*; literally, *had been* (and was at that time) *paralyzed*. The disease had been one of long standing.

19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

He is called in Mark a *paralytic*. See N. on Matt. 4 : 24 (end). *To bring him in*. Jesus was at that time in the house (Mark 2 : 1). *To lay him before him*, and thus draw the attention of Jesus to the sick man.

19. *Could not find, &c.* The difficulty of entrance resulted from the crowds, which had gathered in and around the house. *By what way or manner*. The ellipsis is rightly supplied in our version. *Because of the multitude*. All were so eager to see and hear, that there was no disposition in the crowd to make room for the sick man. *Housetop*. See N. on Matt. 24 : 17. *Into the midst*, i. e. into the quadrangular area or court, where Jesus was teaching (see v. 17). In explanation of the manner in which this was effected, see N. on Mark 2 : 4. As throwing further light on this subject, the following quotation from Thomson's *Land and Book* (vol. ii. p. 6), will be read with interest: "We must banish from our minds every form of European or American houses. Those of Capernaum, as is evident from the ruins, were, like those of modern villages in the same region, low, very low, with flat roofs, reached by a stairway from the yard or court. Jesus probably stood in the open *lewan*, and the crowd were around and in front of him. Those who carried the paralytic not being able "to come at him for the press," ascended to the roof, removed so much of it as was necessary, and let down their patient through the aperture. This was easy to be accomplished. The roof is only a few feet high, and by stooping down, and holding the corners of the couch—merely a

21 "And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? "Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

see Mat. 9 : 3; Ma. 9 : 6, 7.

see Pa. 23 : 5; La. 48 : 25.

thickly-padded quilt, as at present in this region—they could let down the sick man, without any apparatus of ropes or cords to assist them. The whole affair was the extemporaneous device of plain peasants, accustomed to open their roofs, and let down grain, straw, and other articles, as they still do in this country." Dr. Thomson further adds, that it is his impression that the covering of the roof over the *lewan* was not made of earth (the more usual covering of these low houses), but of materials more easily taken up.

20. See N. on Matt. 9 : 2.

21. *Who is this?* In Mark: *Why doth this man* (contemptuously spoken, see N. on Mark 2 : 7; Matt. 26 : 61) *speak blasphemy?* A slight verbal variation, but expressive of the same sentiment. The charge of blasphemy is here based, not upon words spoken against God, but upon an arrogation of the divine prerogative. It is as though they had said: 'Who is this? What are this man's pretensions, that on his own authority he should pronounce forgiveness of sin, the sole prerogative of God? He is guilty of the rankest blasphemy.' Had our Lord been a mere man, or the highest of created beings, their reasoning would have been correct. The absolution of sin pronounced by such a person, would have been the highest type of blasphemy. But the language is becoming and appropriate, when regarded as spoken by a Being who was God incarnate. Indeed we may venture farther and affirm, that such words of forgiveness could never have been uttered by a just and holy God, unless there had been such a

23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thine house.

25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

manifestation of the Deity, as was made in Christ Jesus. Words of pardon became His lips, who left the bosom of the Father (John 1:18), to make atonement for sin.

25. *Before them*, i. e. in the sight of all. The miracle was open and well attested. *That whereon he lay*. Bengel quaintly remarks: "the bed had sustained the man; now the man carries the bed." *Departed, &c.* A test of the thoroughness and permanency of his cure. He carried the couch even to his house. *Glorifying God*, i. e. uttering, as he passed along, praises and thanks to God for his wonderful cure. These incidents are peculiar to Luke, and add much to the fulness and beauty of the narration. The chasm which we find in Mark, is here filled up by the words, "glorifying God."

26. *They were all amazed*; literally, *ecstasy* (i. e. the being out of their mind) *possessed all*. The expression accords, therefore, with Mark's, *they were all beside themselves* (with astonishment); in our own version, *were all amazed*, which neither in Mark nor in Luke reaches the force of the original. *Filled with fear*. Not necessarily religious fear, but a natural awe and reverence, in view of such evidence of supernatural power. *We have seen, &c.* A slight variation from Mark. Both forms of expression were doubtless used by the excited multitude. *Strange things*; literally, *events beyond belief*, marvellous, paradoxical. Reference is

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to day.

27 ¶ And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

o Mat. 9:9; Ma. 2:13, 14.

doubtless had, no less to the absolution of the man's sins, than to the miracle itself. This is evident from the preceding context, where the forgiveness of the man's sins creates more surprise, than his wonderful cure. *To day* imparts emphasis by its specific designation of time. Whatever they had before seen, the events of that day were strange beyond comparison.

27, 28. THE CALL OF MATTHEW. *Capernaum*. See N. on Matt. 9:9; Mark 2:13, 14. Mark gives locality to this incident, by representing it as taking place, while Jesus was on his way to the shore of the lake, where he taught the people who followed him thither.

27. *And saw*. The verb is more intensive, than the one employed in the parallel passage in Mark. It signifies *looked upon, attentively regarded*, and represents our Lord as fixing his eyes some moments upon the man, previous to uttering the words *follow me*, which were to change the whole tenor of his life. *Levi*. His apostolic name was Matthew, and thus he is designated in the call, as narrated in his own gospel.

28. *He left all*. This is added by Luke to the account given by Matthew and Mark. We are not so to interpret it, as to preclude his settling up and arranging his affairs, so that his employers might receive no detriment from his change of pursuit (see N. on Matt. 9:9). Much less is it to be pressed to signify the giving up, on his part, of all subsequent control over his

29 'And Levi made him a great feast in his own house : and 'there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners ?

31 And Jesus answering said

p Mat. 9: 10; Ma. 2: 15.  
q Ch. 15: 1.

own property, for in the next verse, he is said to have made a great feast at his own house, which was some months after his call (see N. on Matt. 9: 9, 10). The reference is rather to the ready and cheerful obedience, which he yielded to the command of Jesus, and which led him in due season to close up his temporal affairs, and attach himself to the person of Jesus, as one of his chosen apostles.

29-39. LEVI'S FEAST. *Capernaum*. See N. on Matt. 9: 10-17; Mark 2: 15-22. There are slight verbal dissimilarities, in the account of this feast by the three evangelists, but not so as to effect in the least their essential agreement. Luke is less full than Matthew and Mark, but relates one or two particulars, necessary to give completeness to the narrative taken as a whole.

29. *Levi made him, &c.* What can be only inferred from Matthew's account, is here expressly stated by Luke, that this great entertainment was given by Levi (i. e. Matthew) himself. In regard to the time when the feast was made, and the best method of harmonizing the statement of the three evangelists, see N. on Matt. 9: 10. *A great feast*. This refers to the extensive preparations, and abundant supply of provisions for the great company, rather than to mere display or magnificence of entertainment, which the word *great*, in such a connection, sometimes with us implies. *In his own house*. So Mark; but the modesty of Matthew left this to be inferred by his readers. *A great company*. The original word signifies

unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

32 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

33 And they said unto him, 'Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the

r Mat. 9: 13; 1 Ti. 1: 15.  
s Mat. 9: 14; Ma. 2: 18.

an irregular crowd or throng of people, as opposed to a select assembly. The feast was a general one, to which all, who had acquaintance or business relations with Levi, were invited. *And of others* includes those who are called *sinners* in Matthew and Mark, that is, such persons as were so regarded by the Pharisees and other strict observers of the law. It does not necessarily imply, that they were persons of a notoriously bad character, but only such, in the estimation of the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees.

30. *Their scribes*, i. e. those belonging to Capernaum, where this entertainment was given. *Why do ye eat?* In Matthew: *Why eateth your Master?* The question was aimed at our Lord, and doubtless proposed in his hearing, although not until the close of the feast, for reasons given in N. on Matt. 9: 11.

31. *Whole*; literally, *well*, in good health. In Matthew and Mark: *strong, sound*. The same word for *they that are sick*, is found in the three evangelists.

32. See N. on Matt. 9: 12.

33. *And they said unto him, &c.* This question in Matthew was put by the disciples of John; and in Mark, by both the disciples of John and of the Pharisees. In Luke it is represented as being proposed by the aforementioned scribes and Pharisees. If we consider them as proposing it through their disciples, Luke's account is harmonized with that of Mark. In regard to Matthew, he makes no mention of

Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

36 And he spake also a para-

Mat. 9: 16, 17; Ma. 2: 21, 22.

the Pharisees, doubtless for the reason, that the question seemed to him to derive its principal importance, from its having been proposed by the disciples of so eminent a servant of God. *Prayers* do not refer to the common and usual prayers of devout men, but to those which accompanied a life of austere devotion, such as John and his disciples practised. It is suggested by Webster and Wilkinson, that many of John's followers may have been from among the Essenes, whose previous asceticism would lead them to regard with surprise, the departure of Jesus and his disciples from the stern habits of self-denial practised by their master. These Essenes were a solitary community, living on the borders of the Dead Sea, without females, their numbers being replenished by such as joined them from society without. They had no money, or any of the conveniences, not to say luxuries of life, which are purchased with money. As the theatre of John's ministrations was in their vicinity, it is not strange that many of them should have attended his preaching, and some of them even have become his disciples.

34. *Can ye make* (by your ordinances, precepts, and practices) *the children, &c.* The form of this question in the original, implies that a negative answer is expected. *While the bridegroom is with them*, and they have no occasion to fast. Here lies the antithesis between this and the following verse. In the one case fasting would be performed, if at

ble unto them; No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

38 But new wine must be put

all, by compulsion, in the other case, it would be spontaneous and genuine.

35. *But the days will come, &c.* Webster and Wilkinson translate and explain thus: *But days will come* (when the bridegroom shall not be with them), *and whenever the bridegroom is removed from them, then shall they fast in those days.* This translation is faithful to the original, and is doubtless the true one. There is, however, another mode of translation, which avoids the ellipsis, and is equally literal; *the days will come, even [the days] when, &c.* The words *in those days*, are not to be regarded as an unnecessary pleonasm of *the days will come*, at the commencement of the verse, but as an emphatic repetition. Indeed, the structure of the whole verse shows, that a great and solemn truth is declared. On the verbal criticism and the sentiment intended to be conveyed, see N. on Matt. 9: 15, 16.

36. Luke introduces this illustration as a *parable*, which here means a proverbial expression or simile, illustrative of some truth. It is closely connected in thought with the preceding context, being designed to illustrate and enforce the principle of congruity and fitness, which would be violated, should the disciples of Jesus adopt the ascetic habits of John's disciples or those of the Pharisees. See N. on Matt. 9: 16, 17. *Both the new maketh a rent.* This is the common, but evidently erroneous translation. The idea is somewhat expanded, in comparison with the parallel pas-

into new bottles; and both are preserved.

### 39 No man also having drunk

sage in Matthew and Mark. The injury is there represented as done solely to the old garment, into which the new piece has been inserted. But here not simply a new piece of cloth is referred to, but a piece of cloth taken out of a new garment, in order to repair an old and worn out one. In this case, a two-fold injury is done, the new garment being spoiled by the rent made in taking out the piece, and the old garment injured by the introduction of an unsuitable piece. The translation, therefore, should be: *If so* (i. e. if he does the thing referred to), *he both rends the new* (garment from which the piece is taken), *and the piece taken from the new agrees not with the old*. Had the disciples of Jesus fasted, as did John's disciples and those of the Pharisees, they would have done that which was unsuitable to the genius and spirit of the new dispensation, and like incongruous patch-work have marred the consistency of the old.

39. In this verse, which is peculiar to Luke, our Lord is thought by some expositors, to refer to the reluctance with which men embrace that which is new and untried, in consequence of their attachment to what is old and familiar. As old wine was more palatable than that which was new, and as a man, who had just tasted of its rich flavor, would not crave immediately that which was new and harsh to the taste, so it could not be expected that the Jews would readily abandon the old dispensation, with its imposing rites and ceremonies, for the simplicity of the new. The expositors who adopt this view of the passage, regard it therefore as slightly apologetic. There are some who place the stress on the word *immediately*, and regard the illustration as indicative of the gradual process, by which our Lord was to induct his disciples to the more painful duties and self-denials of his service. But this is too frigid a sense, and depends too much upon the emphasis given to a subordinate word of

old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better.

the passage. It appears to me that the spirit of the passage is misconceived, by referring the old wine to the old dispensation which was passing away, or to the habits and practices of his disciples, from which they could not be well dissevered except by a gradual process. The sentiment I take to be this: As one on whose lips abides the flavor of old wine, has no relish for the new which may be proffered him, so they, who have tasted the peace, joy, and freedom of the gospel, cannot be easily induced to return to the fastings, austerities, and burdensome rites of Judaism. Thus this verse is an advance, on the argument drawn from the fitness and congruity of things; against the charge of the Pharisees, and also of John's disciples, that Jesus and his disciples did not observe fastings and formal prayers. There was not only an incongruity in their doing this, but being brought, as they were, into the grace and liberty of the new dispensation, like men who refused to exchange old wines for new, they could not readily be persuaded to place themselves under the burdensome ritual of the old dispensation, which was passing away. This verse, therefore, contains no apology, as Olshausen and Alford think, for the reluctance with which old religious customs are given up; nor, as Doddridge and others maintain, for the tardiness which his disciples manifested in forsaking social enjoyments for the more austere duties of religion; but is intended as a simple assertion of the superiority of the new over the old dispensation. The whole scope of our Lord's illustrations is simply this: there is an incongruity in engrafting upon the new dispensation, the effete austerities and burdensome rites of the old; and if it were not so, the freedom and grace of the gospel are such, that no one who has tasted its blessings, will consent to return to the bondage of a dispensation, now passing away and soon to disappear forever.

## CHAPTER VI.

AND \*it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in *their* hands.

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that \*which is not lawful to do on the sabbath days?

3 And Jesus answering them

α Mat. 12:1; Ma. 9:23.

δ Ex. 20:10.

## CHAPTER VI.

1-5. THE DISCIPLES PLUCK THE EARS OF GRAIN ON THE SABBATH. *Way to Galilee.* See Ns. on Matt. 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28. Matthew's account of the incident here related is the fullest.

1. *The second sabbath, &c.* This expression is peculiar to Luke, and is thought to signify the first sabbath after the second day of unleavened bread. See N. on Matt. 12:1. Some refer it to the first sabbath after Pentecost. But if John 5:1-47 relates to a discourse, held at the feast of the passover, we shall see a reason why Jesus left in haste for Galilee, and must refer this to the first sabbath after the second day of the passover. *Rubbing them* (i. e. the heads of grain) *with the hands* so as to separate the kernels from the chaff. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i. p. 510) says, that he has often seen his muleteers, while passing along the wheat-fields, pluck off ears, rub them in their hands, and eat the grains, unroasted, just as the apostles are said to have done. This circumstance is found only in Luke, and shows that he was not dependent upon Matthew or Mark, for the incidents of this walk through the cornfields.

2. *Said unto them*, i. e. the disciples. In Matthew and Mark, this inquiry respecting the conduct of the disciples, is addressed to our Lord himself. The inquiry was doubtless repeated in various forms, in order to show their pious

said, Have ye not read so much as this, \*what David did, when himself was ahungered, and they which were with him;

4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shewbread, and gave also to them that were with him; \*which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

ε 1 Sa. 21:6.

δ Le. 24:9.

horror at the act. It would appear from a comparison of these statements of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, that Jesus did not himself eat of the corn, his mind being probably so intent on the great object of his mission, as to be for the time insensible to hunger. See John 4:32, 34. In like manner we find him in seasons of wakeful devotion and heavenly communion, while his disciples, chosen to accompany him on such occasions, would be overcome with fatigue, and fall into profound sleep. See 9:32; 22:45; Matt. 26:40, 43, 45; Mark 14:37, 40, 41.

3. *Jesus answering, &c.* He was their master, and hence he replied in their behalf. The question had also been proposed to him (Matthew, Mark). *Have ye not read so much as this?* More literally and simply; *have ye not read this?* The pronoun refers forward to v. 4, where it is explained.

4. *House of God.* See N. on Matt. 12:4. *And gave also, &c.* This was a heightening circumstance. It might be argued that David, called of God to a peculiar work and office, might lawfully do things forbidden to others. But here we are informed, that his companions partook also of the consecrated bread. Reference is had here to those persons who had fled with David from the court of Saul. The accessions to his band at the cave of Adullam were subsequent to this.

5. On this great proof text of our



6 'And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.

8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and

• Mat 12: 9; Ma 8: 1. See ch. 13: 14; & 14: 8; John 9: 1a.

Lord's supreme divinity, see N. on Matt. 9: 8.

6-11. THE HEALING OF THE WITHERED HAND ON THE SABBATH. *Galilee.* See N. on Matt. 9: 9-11; Mark 3: 1-6. There is a close verbal resemblance between Luke and Mark, both which evangelists have some things not inserted by Matthew, while his illustration from the sheep fallen into a pit on the sabbath, is omitted by them.

6. *On another sabbath.* These words are found only in Luke, and give us ground to conjecture, that this miracle took place on the next sabbath after the incident in the cornfields. *And taught,* according to his usual custom. *Right hand.* A definiteness of expression, which attests to the independence of Luke's narrative.

7. *Watched him;* literally, *were watching him.* The verb is employed of one, who watches closely with evil intent. The direction to which their watchfulness tended is contained in the next clause, *whether he would heal, &c.,* their evil design, in the words which follow, *that they might find, &c. Accusation,* i. e. some ground of accusation.

8. *But he knew, &c.* This passage furnishes proof of our Lord's divinity, not the less valuable and convincing, because introduced with so little apparent design on the part of the evangelist. Indeed it does not seem to have entered the mind of the writers of the New Testament, if we except John,

stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with

who wrote his gospel, when heresies in regard to our Lord's person and dignity were beginning to spring up, that the divinity of Jesus Christ would ever be denied, or even doubted. As the Old Testament writers everywhere take for granted the fact of God's existence, and do not stop to prove it, so in the New Testament the co-equality of the Son with the Father is assumed as a fact, or, if referred to, is spoken of as resting upon the most indisputable ground of belief. *Rise up and stand forth, &c.* As a great principle, in regard to the proper observance of the sabbath, was to be established, the miracle was designedly wrought in the presence of all. It is probable, that the question proposed by the Pharisees (Matt. 12: 10) was not put until the man, in obedience to the command of Jesus, came forth into the full view of the assembly.

9. *I will ask you one thing.* This implies what we are definitely informed of in Matthew, that the Pharisees had previously proposed to him a question. Thus the evangelists are continually corroborating one another's statements, and giving completeness to the general narrative.

10. *And looking round, &c.* Mark is here more full, as will be seen by referring to the parallel passage, on which see Note.

11. *Were filled with madness.* Their rage was such as to well-nigh deprive

another what they might do to Jesus.

12 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, that he went out

*J Mat 14 : 23.*

them of reason; for such is the literal sense of the original. Our Lord had not only put them to open shame, by publicly exposing their hypocrisy, but by the form of his question, had shown that he fully penetrated their murderous designs upon himself. See N. on Matt. 12 : 13. *And communed, &c.* This is referred by Mark (v. 6) to the Pharisees and Herodians. See N. on Matt. 12 : 14; 22 : 15. *What they might do, &c.* This is explained by the parallel passage in Mark, *how they might destroy him.*

12-19. JESUS WITHDRAWS TO A MOUNTAIN AND CHOOSES THE TWELVE. *Near Capernaum.* See Ns. on Matt. 10 : 2-4; Mark 8 : 13-19.

12. *In those days.* The designation of time is here very general. It would appear, from a comparison with Matthew and Mark, that what is here related took place soon after Jesus retired from the Sea of Tiberias (Mark 8 : 7), to avoid the murderous designs of the Pharisees and Herodians (Mark 8 : 6). According to Luke, our Lord *went up into a* (literally, *the*) *mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.* See N. on 3 : 21 (end). What an example is here left to his followers. If he, sinless as he was, found it conducive to his spiritual strength and success in ministerial labor, to spend much time in prayer, how much more is this necessary for us, who are polluted with sin, and manifest so little zeal and fidelity in our Master's service. *Continued all night;* literally, *was passing the night.* I see no reason why we should not refer this to the whole night. The mind of our Lord was wrought up, doubtless, to an unwonted pitch of excitement, in view of the spiritual desolations around him. His labors were abundant, and yet he was unable himself to impart personal instruction to the thousands who stood in perishing

into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples :

need of the bread of life. During the whole night he poured out his soul in prayer to God, and on the following morning chose and set apart twelve, whom he called apostles, and who were to be especially instructed and prepared to be sent forth as ministers of his word. The solemn deliberation with which this call of the Twelve was performed, and the long-continued and earnest prayer which preceded it, should serve to impress upon all his ministers, the solemn responsibility of ordaining candidates for the ministry, and the necessity of imploring the divine blessing and guidance in the discharge of this duty. The words *in prayer* are interpreted by some, *in the place of prayer*, i. e. in one of the *proseuchas* or oratories erected for prayer, which Webster and Wilkinson think to be the same, as the high places mentioned in 1 Sam. 8 : 19; 10 : 5.

13. *When it was day.* It was probably early in the morning, when he summoned to him his disciples, out of whose number to choose the Twelve. *He chose.* In the original, *having chosen*, the participle being constructed with the words, *he came down*, in v. 17. The names in vs. 14-16 are in apposition with the numeral *twelve*, and are therefore in a sense parenthetical. *Apostles*, from a word signifying *to send forth*; hence *persons sent out, messengers.* The word in the New Testament (except in Acts 14 : 4, 14), is applied to the Twelve, whom Jesus on the present occasion commissioned to be his more intimate friends and followers, and to be the founders, under him as their Great Head, of the church which he was about to establish. Judas by his betrayal of Christ forfeited his apostleship. The place thus left vacant was filled by Matthias, although some, who look upon his appointment as not being in accordance with the mind of the

'and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles ;

14 Simon, <sup>4</sup>whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes,

16 And Judas *'the brother of James,* and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

g Mat. 10 : 1.    A John 1 : 42.    † Jude 1.

Spirit, number Paul with the Twelve in the place of Judas.

14. In regard to the order in which the names are given, see N. on Matt. 10 : 2.

16. *Which also was the traitor ;* literally, *who became* (or turned out to be) *the traitor*. He was a wicked man from the beginning, but did not enter upon his traitorous designs, until the time mentioned in 21 : 3.

17. *With them,* i. e. the apostles. *In the plain* at the foot of the mountain. As the place where the following discourse was delivered, is declared by Matthew (5 : 1) to have been a mountain or eminence, we must interpret the words here of an elevated plain or table land. There is no serious objection to our supposing him, after his descent into the plain, to have selected some eminence for the delivery of his discourse. The variation in Matthew and Luke is not serious enough to warrant the inference, that two distinct speeches and at different times are referred to, but serves simply to show that they are not servile copyists, one from the other. Alford notices the suggestion of some critics, that our Lord stood on a flat ledge or shelf on the side of the mountain, and adds, "more naturally below the mountain." But in two independent narrations there will always be more or less minor differences, which, instead of subtracting, add to the credibility of the statement. *Company of the disciples,* no longer in-

17 And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, <sup>4</sup>and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases ;

18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

19 And the whole multitude

‡ Mat. 4 : 25 ; Ma. 8 : 7.

cluding in their class the Twelve, who had just been chosen as his immediate attendants. This division of the disciples into two classes, is again referred to in 10 : 1. The *great multitude of people*, spoken of in the next clause, Bengel denominates the *third class*.

18. *Were vexed.* The word properly denotes the being vexed or harassed by crowds, and seems to refer to the numerous array of demons, which were then let loose to afflict men. We must not rely, however, upon such words, as furnishing positive proof, that demoniacal possessions were then more frequent than at other times, although this may be conjectured. See N. on Matt. 4 : 24. *Unclean spirits.* See N. on Matt. 10 : 1. *Were healed.* No argument against the reality of demoniacal possessions can be drawn from this term, inasmuch as those who were possessed with demons, were afflicted to a greater or less extent with physical maladies.

19. *Whole multitude* of diseased persons. They of course are not referred to, who were in sound health. The words include, as a genus, the species also, who are referred to in the preceding verse as vexed with unclean spirits. *Sought to touch him.* Such was the eagerness with which these sick persons sought to gain his attention, that without waiting for their individual turn, or to receive from him an invitation, they all press forward to touch him, and such was his gracious condescension and power, that a healing

'sought to touch him : for " there went virtue out of him, and healed *them* all.

† Mat. 14 : 36.  
m Ma. 5 : 30 ; ch. 8 : 46.

virtue went forth, by which all who thus approached him, were healed. It must not be thought, that his eye did not rest with omniscient regard on every one who thus touched him, so that this healing virtue was exercised in each instance, according to his infinite will.

*Virtue*. The same word translated *power* in 4 : 36, on which see Note. *Out of* ; literally, *forth from*. The preposition here made use of refers to this power, as an abiding quality in Jesus. In 8 : 46, a different preposition is employed, denoting the origination of this power with him. In Mark 5 : 30, where the same incident is related, a still different preposition is used, signifying the residence of this power in him. See Webster and Wilkinson. Thus by a varied expression, the great truth is made known and enforced, that in Jesus dwelt the full measure of uncreated and undervied power.

20-49. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. *Near Capernaum*. See Ns. on Matt. chaps. V.-VII. It hardly need be said, that Luke is far less full in the report of this discourse than Matthew. A slight comparison will show, however, that Luke is not a mere copyist, or one who has gathered together fragmentary discourses, delivered at different times and on different occasions, and united them into one continuous discourse. The proof is very abundant and irrefragable, that both evangelists refer to the same discourse, and although Matthew is more full and extended, yet this in reality furnishes no argument against the identity of the two. In the fifth chapter of Matthew, vs. 5-10, and 13-19, are omitted by Luke. So also Matt. 5 : 43-47 is much more expanded than the parallel portion in Luke. The sixth chapter of Matthew is wholly omitted by Luke, and vs. 6-14 of the seventh. On the other hand Luke 6 : 22-26, is much fuller than the corresponding portion in Matt. 5 : 11, 12.

20 ¶ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, "Blessed *be ye* poor : for yours is the kingdom of God.

n Mat. 5 : 8 ; & 11 : 5 ; Ja. 2 : 5.

The same is true also of Luke 6 : 32-35, compared with Matt. 5 : 46, 47, and Luke 6 : 37-41, compared with Matt. 7 : 1, 2. In the parallel portions of the two evangelists, there is just that golden mean of diversity, which on the one hand constitutes in no instance an essential disagreement, and on the other, furnishes the strongest evidence, that both were penned by independent writers.

The question may be asked why Luke omitted such extended and important parts of the discourse. We may answer this by asking, why it was that Mark omitted the whole discourse, or why Matthew passed over all that is contained in chaps. I. II. of Luke, and makes not the slightest mention of that which is narrated in chaps. XIII. : 22—XVIII. : 14, or why all three of the synoptic Evangelists omitted the raising of Lazarus, and the discourse of our Lord at the institution of the Supper, as well as many other discourses detailed by John. These and similar questions are based on no greater mistake, than that, out of which grows this difficulty, which is felt in reconciling the fulness of Matthew with the omissions of Luke, in the Sermon on the Mount. Had the Evangelists followed servilely, each in the steps of his predecessor, what need would there have existed for four gospels? In what respect would the second, third, and fourth have added to the amount of information given in the first? But in the diversity of style and fulness, which characterize them as now written, we have a much clearer and comprehensive view of our Lord's history and ministry, and in addition, the highest evidence of the veracity of each writer, in the independent and concurrent testimony of the others, in regard to facts related in common by two or more of them.

20. *And he*. The pronoun in the original is emphatic, and places our

21 'Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled.  
'Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

22 'Blessed are ye, when men

o La 55: 1; & 65: 13; Mat. 5: 4.  
p La 61: 3; Mat. 5: 4.

Lord, as Bengel well remarks, in contrast with the multitude, who were personally intent on being healed, or seeing the wonderful manifestations of his power. *Lifted up his eyes*. A form of expression, representing the solemnity and importance of the discourse, about to be pronounced. Its import is much like the introduction to the Sermon in Matt. 5: 1, and he opened his mouth, on which see Note. Upon his disciples, to whom, until v. 27, his discourse is addressed, but in the hearing of the people. See 7: 1. *Blessed be ye poor*; literally, *blessed* (be ye) *the poor*; i. e. such of you as are possessed of that lowliness and meekness of spirit, which prepares you to receive the gospel and obey its requisitions. The spirituality of the promise annexed to this beatitude, shows very conclusively what is expressly affirmed in Matthew, that the *poor in spirit* are referred to. *For yours*. In Matthew the third person, *for theirs*, is employed. The same distinction of persons is kept up through the whole beatitudes. *Kingdom of God* is but a varied expression for *kingdom of heaven* in Matthew, and is to be taken both here and there, in its widest sense, for the peace, joy, and spiritual blessings of the Messiah's reign. It does not follow, as Alford well remarks, that *heaven and God* are precisely of the same import, in this expression of such common occurrence, but "are two different ways of designating the same kingdom, the one by its situation in *heaven*, the other, by *Him*, whose it is."

21. *That hunger now*. In Matthew, it is a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, which precludes from it the idea of mere physical hunger. *Now*, in this life. *That weep*. A different verb is here employed from that in the

shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

q Mat. 5: 11; 1 Ps. 9: 19; & 8: 14; & 4: 14.  
r John 16: 2.

parallel passage in Matthew, this relating to the open expression of grief, that, to what is confined within. The language in Luke is the strongest, referring to grief and anguish of spirit, so deep as to find expression in tears, and groans, and loud lamentations. *Shall laugh*. Here also an external indication of joy is put for internal peace and comfort. The words *they shall be comforted*, are employed by Matthew, as comporting better with the verb selected by him in the beatitude, than the more open expression of joy found in Luke. In Matthew, it is heartfelt sorrow to be followed by mental serenity and peace; in Luke, loud and open grief succeeded by joy, which can only find adequate expression in laughter.

22. *Shall hate you*. Here Luke employs a word expressive of internal hate, while Matthew represents its external manifestation, in the words *shall revile you*. In all these instances, the same general idea is designated, although in varied language. *Shall separate you*, &c. The language is here based on the three forms of Jewish excommunication, although by no means to be restricted to these. It is intended to designate all kinds of expulsion from society, in consequence of the odium attached to faith in Christ, and an open profession of his name. *Shall reproach you*, as they cast you forth from their society and intercourse. The verb includes all kinds of opprobrious words and actions, in which hatred finds expression. *Cast out your name as evil*. This is an advance on the idea, contained in the verb *shall separate*. Their very name was to become a term of reproach. A strong and well-sustained climax in reproach and suffering for Christ, is here denoted in the verbs *hate*, *separate*, *reproach*,

23 'Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for 'in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

*cast out.* Many a disciple has incurred these penalties of a christian profession in their augmenting force and violence, until the very death, to which they were consigned by their persecutors, became one of relief and joyous welcome. Whether *name* refers here to their collective name *Christians*, or to their individual names, is quite immaterial. The idea is that the name by which they were distinguished, whatever it might be, would become a term of reproach. How fully this prediction has been verified, the student of ecclesiastical history needs not to be informed. *As evil*; more literally, *as an evil thing*, the words implying the removal from sight of some vile and loathsome object. *For the Son of man's sake*, i. e. because of your belief in the Son of man. In Matthew: *for my sake*. These verbal variations are all to be noted, in proof of the independence of the two reports of the discourse.

23. *In that day*, i. e. in the time of such defamation of name and character. *Leap for joy.* A most emphatic expression of exultant and jubilant joy. See N. on Matt. 5:12. *Behold* is added in Luke, to call attention to the reason for such intense joy. *Is great in heaven.* Great indeed must be the reward, which shall call forth such demonstrations of joy in the midst of so violent persecutions. *In like manner*; literally, *according to the same things*. Essential resemblance is here denoted, not a partial or imperfect similitude, the idea being that of a model, in exact conformity to which the action is put forth. The treatment of those who were to suffer persecution for the sake of Christ, would not differ from that received by the ancient prophets, and hence not only in view of their reward, which would be great in heaven, but because associated with so goodly a company, who had gone before them,

24 'But woe unto you 'that are rich! for 'ye have received your consolation.

s Mat. 5:12; Ac. 5:41; Col. 1:24; Ja. 1:2.  
s Ac. 7:51. w Am. 6:1; Ja. 5:1.  
w Ch. 12:21. y Mat. 6:2, 5, 16; Ch. 16:25.

they were commanded to rejoice. The prophets here spoken of, are opposed to the false prophets referred to in v. 26. For the persecutions, which they endured, see 1 Kings 13:4; 2 Chron. 24:21; 36:16; Neh. 9:26; Heb. 11:32-38.

24. *But woe unto you.* These woes are not so much to be regarded imprecatory as declarative, *woe is unto you*. As to the question whether they are rightly inserted in this connection, I cannot hesitate a moment in the belief, that our Lord uttered them on the occasion here mentioned. Their introduction is natural and apposite. They produce no break or unseemly excrescence in the narrative, nor do they affect in any degree the unity of the discourse. To suppose that these woes, with the four preceding beatitudes, were uttered on some other occasion, and inserted here, as forming a portion of the Sermon on the Mount, is open to the most serious objections. It is hardly conceivable, that Luke, with his known care and habit of historical accuracy, would represent our Lord as taking his position in presence of this great multitude, and commencing his address by the utterance of beatitudes and woes, which were not actually spoken on that, but on some other occasion. How much more natural to suppose that Matthew for some reason omitted these woes, while Luke, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, saw fit to write them out. *That are rich.* This is opposed to the spiritual poverty, spoken of in v. 20. The persons here referred to, are the same as those denominated *righteous* in Matt. 9:13, on which see Note. See also Rev. 3:17. *Consolation* is employed as the effect for the cause. These self-righteous persons had their sources of consolation, in the reputation which they enjoyed for great sanctity, and the

25 'Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. 'Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

8 La. 6: 18. a Pr. 14: 18.

honors they received as the spiritual guides and teachers of the people. *Have received* already in this life. See N. on Matt. 6: 2 (end).

25. This woe stands opposed to the beatitude in v. 21. *Full* is to be taken in the sense *sated with food*, it being opposed to *shall hunger*, in the next clause. Stripped of its metaphor, it refers to the being satisfied with every earthly object of desire. The persons denoted are those, who have their portion of good things in the present life, and have made no provision for the wants of the soul after death. *Shall hunger*. The verb has an intensive sense, *shall famish* through utter want of food, i. e. shall be bereft of every thing, which will render the soul happy in the world to come. *Woe unto you that laugh*. The very converse of the beatitude in v. 21. As *weeping* was there the outward manifestation of internal sorrow, so here, *laughter* is the external sign of the happiness derived from the pleasures of sense. The sin does not consist in the laughter, but in the worldly aims, pursuits, and enjoyments, crowned with such success as to dispel serious thoughts, and fill the mind with frivolity and dissipation. The persons represented here find all their happiness in this world, and as laughter indicates the merry heart, so here it shows that they have no sorrow for sin, or humiliating sense of their unworthiness before God. *Mourn and weep*. No distinction is to be sought here in these words, they being joined together for the sake of emphasis.

26. *Woe unto you*. Our Lord here addresses his disciples, and virtually all in every age, who are enrolled as his followers. The sentiment is not that it is a positive mark of evil, to be spoken well of by a bad man. The world is often compelled to take knowledge of Christians, by their meek, quiet, and

26 'Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

8 John 15: 19; 1 John 4: 5.

heavenly deportment, that "they have been with Jesus." But the sentiment is, that when a professing Christian so conducts himself, that the impenitent around speak well and honorably of him, because his life furnishes no reproof for their worldliness and impenitence, he is then in a most dangerous condition, from which if he is not extricated by the grace of God, he will be the subject of unutterable woe. "The friendship of the world worketh death." James 4: 4. *All men* refers here to the unconverted portion of society. Thus far in the history of the world, this class of men have had such numerical superiority, that it is no hyperbole to denominate them *all men*. The structure of the sentence, however, refers to the class of men opposed to believers, represented here by *you*. In such a connection, we must not press the word *all*, to signify every individual of the class, but simply the class taken as a whole. *For so did their fathers, &c.* The pronoun *their* refers to *all men*, in the preceding clause. Those who lived in the times of the prophets, were their ancestors. As the Jewish nation rejected God's true prophets, and listened to those who were false, loading them with honor and praise, so it became a very clear indication of the absence of true godliness in the professed followers of Christ, when the posterity of such men, having the same spirit and temper, should launch out in their praise. Like causes produce like results, and what was true of one wicked age, would hold true of a subsequent one, as far as the condition of things would permit. This is a universal truth. There is as much hostility now against truth, and those who exemplify it in their lives and conversation, as there was in the days of open persecution; but the spirit of the age does not permit its open and violent

27 'But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

28 Bless them that curse you, and 'pray for them which despitefully use you.

29 'And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other; 'and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to *take thy* coat also.

c Ex. 23: 4; Prov. 25: 2; Mat. 5: 44; v. 35; Ro. 12: 20. d Ch. 23: 84; Ac. 7: 60.

e Mat. 5: 39. f 1 Co. 6: 7.

expression, as when the disciples of Christ were hunted down like wild beasts, and ruthlessly put to death, oftentimes with the most cruel tortures. In the march of Christianity to universal dominion, this hostility will be less and less rampant, until it shall wholly disappear from the earth, in the millennium of the glory and peace to come.

27, 28. The parallel passage is in Matt. 5: 44. The chasm in Luke should be filled up, by reading the intervening portion in Matthew. The words are not here addressed, as in v. 26, exclusively to his disciples, but to all within his hearing. *I say unto you which hear.* Of such primary and universal importance was the truth he was about to utter, that he addressed it to all within the sound of his voice. In the words *love your enemies*, &c. there is almost a verbal agreement between the evangelists, except that in Luke, there is a transposition of the clause, *bless them that curse you*, from the order in which it appears in Matthew. The reader is therefore referred, for further explanation of this passage, to my Note on Matt. 5: 44.

29, 30. These verses are parallel with Matt. 5: 39-42, on which see Notes. In v. 30, the words *every man*, are a slight advance on the pronoun *him* in Matthew. In the latter clause, however, Luke uses the pronoun. The words *would borrow of thee*, in Matthew, are varied in Luke to, *that taketh away thy goods*. The same idea lies at the

30 'Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask *them* not again.

31 'And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32 'For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

g De. 15: 7, 8, 10; Pr. 21: 26; Mat. 5: 42.

A Mat. 7: 12.

h Mat. 5: 46.

basis of both passages, only the form of expression adopted by Luke presents the subject in a stronger light, a larger demand upon Christian charity being made, when it is to be exercised towards a person who would forcibly despoil us of our goods, than towards one who wishes to borrow, even when there is no prospect of his returning the article loaned to him. The benevolence of the gospel requires a free and cordial administering to the wants of others, whether they approach you as importunate mendicants, or troublesome borrowers, or even attempt by violence to despoil you of your possessions. The general principles of Christian charity are here taught in language, which, as we have remarked more fully in Note on Matt. 5: 42, is not to be interpreted literally, since thus it would break up all the foundations of society, and destroy all control of personal property. Every man would be at the mercy of worthless and insolent vagabonds, and a premium would be offered to a life of violence and vagrancy.

31. This verse finds its parallel in Matt. 7: 12, on which see Note.

32-35. This passage follows in sense vs. 27, 28, which were transposed somewhat out of their order. The parallel passage is found in Matt. 5: 46, 47. It is here expanded, vs. 34, 35 not being found in Matthew. There is, however, a close agreement in sense between the two portions, showing that the same spirit animates both, notwithstanding



83 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

84 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also

to Mat. 5: 42.

the slight verbal variations. *Sinners* is put in v. 82, for *publicans* in Matthew. The words are often found joined together, for reasons which appear in Na. on Matt. 5: 46; 9: 10. *What thank.* In Matthew: *what reward.* Thanks are often in themselves a reward. *Have ye, i. e. do ye deserve.* See N. on Matt. 5: 46. It will be seen that the words, *what thank have ye*, are thrice repeated in connection with the acts of loving, doing good, and lending; the first of which is generic, denoting general love and benevolence; the others are special duties, growing out of this good will to our fellow men. To these acts of goodness performed for selfish ends, the three duties enjoined in v. 35 respond.

84. *Hope to receive*, i. e. hope that a like favor will be conferred upon you in time of need, or that something will result to your advantage from the act. Explanatory of this is the clause in the next sentence, *to receive as much again*, i. e. a full equivalent, so that nothing is lost, at least by the act of benevolence. The idea is that to lend on the selfish principle of expecting a like return, is contrary to the spirit of the gospel, which looks not for any earthly reward, but for that which is hereafter to be bestowed in heaven. This does not militate, however, against a judicious use of money, nor teach that one is to lend to every worthless or importunate borrower who may come along.

85. *Hoping for nothing again.* The true sense of the verb, of which this is our common translation, is a matter of much dispute among critics. Alford adopts the rendering: *not despairing*, i. e. without anxiety about the result. But this, although the literal signification of the word, does not suit the con-

lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

85 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest:

to V. 27. m Pa. 37: 26; v. 30. n Mat. 5: 45.

text. Others, after the Syriac version, render: *causing no one to despair* by refusing his request. But this again does not meet the wants of the context, nor does it rest on a reading entitled to undisputed authority. Our common translation is undoubtedly the true one, the composition of the verb not being in this case negative, so as to give it the signification assigned it by Alford, but rather intensive, *fully hoping*. The idea of *back* (i. e. hoping to receive back), is obtained from the previous verse, where it is fully expressed. Alford himself, with his usual critical tact and good judgment, says, "perhaps the force of the context should prevail, and the ordinary meaning be adopted, as there is nothing in analogy to forbid the meaning." *Your reward shall be great.* The possession of such disinterested love, is not only productive in itself of great happiness, but secures the blessing of God, the greatest reward which man can ask. This thought is still further expanded in the next clause: *and ye shall be the children of the Highest*, i. e. ye shall morally resemble Him, and be the heirs of those rich blessings, which he confers upon such as are truly his children, and are beloved of Him. The figurative use of the superlative Highest for the supreme God, as dwelling in the highest heavens (see N. on Matt. 6: 9), is quite common to Luke. See 1: 32, 35, 76; 8: 28; Acts 7: 48; 16: 17. *For he is kind, &c.* This shows that the idea of moral resemblance, is contained in the preceding clause. It is because God exercises his love toward those who are unthankful and disobedient, that they who exercise according to their ability a like disinterestedness, shall be called from this moral resemblance,

for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

36 \* Be ye therefore merciful, as your father also is merciful.

37 \* Judge not, and ye shall not be judged : condemn not, and

o Mat. 5 : 48. p Mat. 7 : 1.

His children. *The unthankful.* It has been remarked by expositors, that this word seems chosen to forestall the common objection, that favors are quite commonly met by ingratitude. The principle laid down is, that however ungrateful may be the recipients of our bounty, we are not on that account to relax our benevolence ; for God is continually showering his blessings upon *the unthankful and the evil.* The class of persons referred to in this latter term, are such as are notoriously wicked, it being an advance on the preceding word, *the unthankful.*

36. *Be ye therefore ;* literally, *become therefore.* The verb in the next clause is a different one, denoting existence, and refers to the attribute of mercy, as always existing in God. The verbs are used with the same distinction in 1 Pet. 1 : 16. In the parallel passage in Matthew, the same verb is employed in both clauses, but the idea of *becoming* perfect is denoted in the first by the future. *Merciful.* In Matthew this is denoted by *perfect* (on which see Note). There is no difference in sense. Whoever has the grace of compassion and mercy, flowing from pure love to God and man, will be in possession of all the kindred graces, which constitute the perfection of moral character. Bengel calls it *the root of all duty.* The expression in Matthew is therefore the more general one, of which the attribute here given is a cardinal virtue. It may be remarked also that the context in Matthew, gives to the word *perfect*, the shade of meaning which the corresponding word has in Luke.

37. *Judge not ;* literally, *also or moreover judge not.* It is joined closely in sense with the preceding context, although in Matthew, the whole of the sixth chapter intervenes between

ye shall not be condemned : forgive, and ye shall be forgiven :

38 \* Give, and it shall be given unto you ; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into

q Pr. 19 : 17.

this verse, and the parallel one in 5 : 48. *Ye shall not be judged.* The potential form, *that ye be not judged,* is employed by Matthew in the same sense. The precept is enforced by an absolute promise in Luke, and by an implied one in Matthew. *Condemn not, &c.* This expands and enforces the preceding command. The word translated *condemn*, is a forensic term denoting judicial condemnation. It is here to be taken in the sense of a condemning, censorious spirit, which looks sharply and unforgivingly at the faults of others, spies out and brings to light every defect, and places it under the ban of condemnation. *Forgive* is also a judicial term, signifying to *release from bonds or arrest*, and hence is figuratively employed in the sense of *to forgive.* This enforces, therefore, the very opposite of the censorious and unforgiving spirit, forbidden in the previous clause. Emphasis is often given to an injunction, by its twofold expression in a negative and positive form. *Ye shall be forgiven.* This is promised as the sure result of the forgiveness of our fellow-men. Oftentimes some Christian virtue or grace is thus singled out, as being the prime ground of salvation and acceptance with God, on the principle, that the possession and exercise of one Christian virtue, presupposes the possession of all the rest.

38. *Give, and it shall be given, &c.* Some think that this relates to the grace of liberality. The context seems, however, to refer it, under figurative language, to a kind and forgiving disposition, referred to in the preceding verse. Give righteous and merciful judgment, overlooking and pardoning the faults of others. Then, on the common principle of *like for like*, men shall requite your benignity, by a

your 'bosom. For 'with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

39 And he spake a parable

*r* Pa. 79: 12.

*s* Mat. 7: 2; Ma. 4: 24; Ja. 2: 12.

superabounding measure of love and forgiveness. The figure, as Alford remarks, is taken from a full measure of dry commodities, as corn, fruits, &c. To those conversant with measuring grains, and such other things as are included in dry measure, the terms here made use of will be perfectly familiar. The most liberal and abundant measure is secured, by pressing down such articles as lie light and loose in the vessel, by shaking it up, and filling it to overflowing. Bengel refers the expression *good measure*, to quality as well as quantity. This is doubtless true, but primary reference is had to quantity, as is evident from the face of the passage. *Shall men give*. The verb has no expressed nominative in the original. Our common version rightly supplies *men*, the sense pointing clearly to recompense from our fellow-men. Some expositors supply *angels*, as the almoners of God's bounty and love towards such, as exercise the spirit here spoken of. But such an ellipse is harsh and unnatural. The discourse here is not about the bestowal of the divine favor, but the reciprocity which characterizes the intercourse of those who strive to outdo one another, in acts of kindness and sympathy. *Into your bosom*. This is supposed to refer to the pocket or lap, formed by the loose garment, as it fell over the girdle. It is put here figuratively for the person himself, to whom this superabundant measure was to be given. It is a delicate mode of bestowing a gift, to place it in one's pocket, or about his person, instead of putting it directly into his hands. Webster and Wilkinson quote Ruth 3: 15, as illustrative of this passage. *That ye mete withal*, i. e. with which ye mete. For the sentiment, see N. on Matt. 7: 2. *Shall be measured to you again or in return*. The *lex talionis*, or law of retaliation, is here laid down as the prin-

unto them; 'Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

40 "The disciple is not above

*t* Mat. 15: 4.

*s* Mat. 10: 24; John 13: 16; & 15: 20.

ciple, on which censorious and implacable critics of other men's misdoings shall be required. This righteous recompense may not always be administered in the present life, but will be fully awarded in the world to come, where all things will be adjusted according to the principles of eternal rectitude.

39. *He spake a parable*, i. e. he uttered a figurative saying. The parable might be longer or shorter, drawn out into an extended story, or compressed in an apophthegm, or short sententious saying. *Unto them*, i. e. his disciples, to whom his discourse was primarily addressed (v. 20). *Can the blind, &c.* This proverb stands in a different connection, in Matt. 15: 14. There the Pharisees were compared to blind guides or way-leaders; and their ruin, together with that of those whom they led astray, is depicted. Here is taught the unfitness of such as are uncharitable in their judgment of others, to be religious guides or instructors, and the disastrous end which awaits both teacher and disciple. The same general idea lies at the basis of the parable, as it is used both here and in Matthew. Any person who assumes the office of instructor, without clear views of truth, and a practical adherence to the principles of benevolence, does it at the hazard of his own and the destruction of all, who put themselves under his guidance. *Can the blind lead the blind* with precision and safety? The form of the question in the original, implies a decided negative. This is also shown by the following clause, where the question is varied in the original, so as to demand a strong affirmative reply.

40. The connection may be seen in the following paraphrase: 'I, your master and instructor, have never assumed the office of an uncharitable judge; why then should you arrogate

his master : but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

41 'And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye ?

42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest

α Mat. 7 : 3.

this to yourselves ? The disciple in this as in all respects, ought not to be above his master, but content himself with being as his master. He should imitate his example, imbibe his spirit, and show that in reality and not in name only, he is his disciple.' There is another aspect also, in which this may be viewed. A censorious demeanor in a teacher, will generally beget a like spirit in the disciple, inasmuch as the disciple cannot be expected to be more perfect than his master. If, therefore, the disciples of Jesus should fall into this habit of uncharitableness, they would not only assume to themselves a prerogative, never exercised by their master, but would become unsafe guides to those who were to be committed to their religious training. The sentiment is weighty and instructive, and one which should be pondered upon, by all who are called to be teachers in the church of Christ. But this verse has also an intimate connection with what follows. The disciple ought not to be above his master. It is not in accordance with the nature of the relations between them, that it should be so. There is presumed to be, in the very nature of the relation of teacher and disciple, a superiority of the former over the latter. But if one, who aspires to be a teacher or reformer, should rebuke his disciple for that of which he himself is more guilty, or for some sin, while one of greater magnitude is overlooked in himself, he becomes inferior to his disciple, and is no longer fit to be his spiritual guide and teacher. *Is perfect* ; literally, *is mended or repaired* ;

not the beam that is in thine own eye ? Thou hypocrite, 'cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

43 'For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit ; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

γ See Pr. 18 : 17.     δ Mat. 7 : 16, 17.

and hence in a secondary sense, *is fully taught, thoroughly instructed* in the subjects taught.

41, 42. These verses serve to expand and illustrate the sentiment of the pithy proverb in v. 39. The total unfitness of one whose spiritual vision is imperfect, to guide others or reform their conduct, is shown here, as in Matt. 7 : 3-5, between which passage and this, there is but a slight verbal variation. The reader is therefore referred to my Notes on Matthew, for a more extended explanation of the passage. The verb rendered *considered* in Luke, and *beholdest* in Matthew, is the same in the original, and is one of the many instances where our translators should have employed the same English word in translation. *How wilt thou say* in Matthew, is here *how canst thou say* ? but with no disagreement in sense. *Brother*. The pretence of brotherly affection, in one of so censorious a spirit, is finely indicated by this address. Opposed to this, is the character awarded by the Omniscient Saviour, *thou hypocrite*. All these indications of brotherly affection, were a flimsy veil, to hide the malignant, censorious spirit within.

43. This is placed by Dr. Robinson and the best harmonists, after v. 44. There seems to be no necessity for this transposition, the parallel between this and the corresponding portion of Matthew (7 : 16-20), being in sense rather than in verbal similarity or arrangement. *For a good tree, &c.* More literally, *for it is not a good tree, which brings forth corrupt fruit, nor a corrupt*

44 For 'every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

45 'A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for 'of the

a Mat. 12: 33. b Mat. 12: 35.  
c Mat. 12: 34.

tree, which bringeth forth good fruit. The law that like produces like, so immutable in the natural world, is here figuratively applied to the law of moral likeness, which exists between the state of the heart, and the external acts of men. This is expressed in a positive form in Matt. 7: 17, on which see Note. The connection between this and the preceding verse, denoted by *for*, is very obvious. One who seeks to be a reformer of other men, and has not corrected his own faults, is like a bad tree, unproductive of good, whatever may be his professions.

44. This law of likeness between the tree and its fruit, is so invariable in the vegetable kingdom, that men can always determine the nature of the tree by the fruit it bears. *For of thorns men do not gather, &c.* In Matthew, this is expressed interrogatively: *do men gather, &c.*, the question being of that kind which implies a negative answer. It is as though our Lord had said: 'It were unreasonable to expect this. It never happens. In like manner, do not look for the fruits of holiness in a corrupt heart.'

45. This law of likeness and conformity in the natural world, is now applied by our Lord to moral resemblance and congruity. The parallel passage, with hardly any variation, is found in Matt. 12: 35, on which see Note. The verb rendered *bringeth forth*, is in Matthew one that should be rendered *throws forth*, which with the plural there used, *good things*, refers more to habit; while in Luke, the specific or individual act

abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

46 'And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

47 'Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:

48 He is like a man which built

d Mal. 1: 6; Mat. 7: 21; & 23: 11; ch. 13: 35.  
e Mat. 7: 24.

is rather regarded. But yet the same general correspondence between the state of the heart, and the nature of a man's conduct, in both passages is designated. *For of the abundance, &c.* See on Matt. 12: 34, where these words are spoken in a different connection, but with the same general sense.

46. Our Lord here makes a special and personal application to his audience, of the truths to which he had just given utterance. *Why call ye me, &c.* Of what avail is an outward acknowledgment of me, as your Lord and Master, if you do not evince your sincerity, by a ready and cheerful obedience to my commands? This sentiment in varied form, is found in Matt. 7: 21-23, on which see Note. The exact sense of the original is: *Why do you address me (with the appellation of) Lord, Lord?* If you are honest in these words of homage and love, you will pay strict observance to all my precepts. The reader will readily see, how naturally this flows from the law of resemblance, illustrated in the preceding verses. It is as though our Lord had said: 'Why are ye so inconsistent in your professions and practice, as to call me Lord, and yet persist in disobedience to my commands?' He thus applied the truth in the closest manner to their heart and conscience. In this, as in other respects, he should be the pattern of every Christian minister, who should always aim to make a practical application of the truth to the hearts and consciences of his hearers.

47-49. A comparison with Matt. 7:

a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock : and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it ; for it was founded upon a rock.

49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth ; against which the stream did beat vehemently,

24-27 (on which see Notes), will show an essential agreement, with only a slight dissimilarity in language. Matthew is the more full, Luke, the more graphic. The comparison in Matthew is fully carried out in all its parts ; Luke has seized upon its strong points, and left to the reader the easy task of supplying the more unimportant particulars. The words *cometh to me* in v. 47, are omitted in Matthew, but without impairing the sense. So at the close of the same verse, *I will show you to whom he is like*, is a less condensed form than the corresponding construction in Matthew. In v. 48, Luke has the more graphic expression, *built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock*, for the simple words in Matthew, *built his house upon a rock*. On the other hand, the blowing of the winds, which in Matthew have so prominent a part in the elemental war upon the house, is wanting in Luke. What is expressed in Matthew by the words *it fell not*, is in Luke, *could not shake it*. In the catastrophe (v. 49), Luke, however, speaks of the fall of the house in the same terms as Matthew. With such essential agreement and diversity of language, who can doubt that these evangelists were independent writers, the veracity of whom is placed beyond a doubt, by the harmony of their statements ? *When the flood arose* ; literally, *when there was a swelling of the streams*. In Matthew, the definite form (*the floods, torrents*) is employed. *The stream beat vehemently* ; literally, *burst against*, the word being expressive of the force

and immediately it fell ; and the ruin of that house was great.

#### CHAPTER VII.

NOW when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

α Mat. 8 : 5.

with which the swollen stream dashed against the house. The graphic language will be understood and appreciated by all, who are conversant with the sudden rise and impetuosity of mountain-torrents, in times of a great fall of rain. In v. 49, the words *without a foundation*, relate to the foundation of rock, referred to in the preceding verse. The foundation of sand, upon which the foolish man built his house, furnished no protection against the storm and flood, and hence was virtually no foundation. *The ruin* ; literally, *the breaking up*, complete destruction being designated. *Great*, i. e. complete and final.

#### CHAPTER VII.

1-10. THE HEALING OF THE CENTURION'S SERVANT. *Capernaum*. See Ns. on Matt. 8 : 5-13. Luke is more full in detail, the testimony of the Jewish elders in favor of the centurion being entirely omitted by Matthew. There is also a slight diversity of statement, which is referred to and reconciled, in my N. on Matt. 8 : 5.

1. *In the audience, &c.* ; literally *into the hearing* (i. e. the ears) of the people. This shows that our Lord's design was to instruct the people, as well as his disciples, to whom the preceding discourse had been mostly directed. See N. on 6 : 20.

2. *Who was dear to him* ; literally, *whom he held in honor or esteem*. This accounts for the great interest which he took in his recovery. It was not uncommon in Roman history, to find

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly,

instances of the deepest affection between master and slave. The mutual relation of protection and dependence, if fulfilled in accordance with the law of love, is apt to beget an affection and confidence of the most enduring nature. *Ready to die.* He was on the very point of death. Matthew has it: *he was grievously tormented*, referring to the violence of the disease, while Luke refers to its fatal result.

3. *Heard of Jesus.* The report of his miraculous powers was now in the mouth of men, and had reached the ear of this Roman centurion. *The elders.* The article is wanting in the original, which gives this shade: *persons who were elders.* These were doubtless elders of the synagogue, which the centurion had built for the Jews (v. 6). Alford thinks, however, that they were merely elders of the people. *That he would come and heal*; literally, *that having come he would heal*, the emphasis lying upon the act of healing.

4. *Instantly*, refers not so much to time, as to the earnest zeal, with which they preferred the centurion's request. The case was too urgent to admit of delay, and the elders spared no pains to bring it to Jesus' notice quickly and in the most favorable manner. *Saying that he was worthy, &c.* A more literal translation would be: *saying, he is worthy for whom you shall do this* (i. e. extend this favor). The Greek particle, rendered that in our version, is simply the sign of the direct quotation, like our double comma. It will be seen in vs. 6, 7, that the centurion pleaded the very opposite of the character here given him by the elders, alleging his unworthiness as a reason why our Lord should not condescend to come under his roof. Both statements were honorable alike to the parties who made them. The elders were not restrained by Jewish

saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this :

5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue,

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far

prejudice, from praising a Roman centurion, while he, with modest worth, could see nothing in himself, rendering him worthy of the least attention on the part of Jesus.

5. *For he loveth our nation.* The meed of praise bestowed upon this centurion, was enhanced from the fact, that the Roman officials were distinguished for their tyranny and oppression, rather than for their love to the Jews. *Hath built*; literally, *hath himself* (at his own expense) *built*. This shows him to have been a man of some wealth, as well as benevolence. *A synagogue*; literally, *the synagogue* in our place. It was probably the only one there.

6. *Then Jesus went, &c.* He interposed no objection, but immediately proceeded on the way to his house. As a comment to this readiness of Jesus to grant the centurion's request, we have in Matthew his words: *I will go and heal him. Sent friends.* This shows his high respect for Jesus that he did not send this second message by his servants, but by his most intimate friends. Doddridge thinks that after this second embassy, the centurion came in person, and expressed to Jesus his deep sense of unworthiness, in the words which follow. But this conjecture does not appear to be well grounded. The words in Matt. 8 : 13, conform to the previous statement, that the centurion came at first unto Jesus, whereas we see by the more particular statement of Luke, that he preferred his request through others. See N. on Matt. 8 : 13. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i. p. 313), referring to the deputations successively sent by Balak to Balaam, says, "This is a very ancient and common custom. Every thing is done by mediation. Thus the centurion sent unto Jesus elders, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. In

from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself; for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof:

7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another,

a hundred instances I have been pressed and annoyed by these mediating ambassadors. Their importunity takes no denial." *Trouble not thyself.* The centurion was apprehensive, that he was putting Jesus to great and unnecessary trouble, in thus asking him to come to his house; an honor, too, of which he was so unworthy. He therefore begs of him, to give himself no farther concern in the matter, than to command his servant to be healed.

7. *Wherefore*, i. e. in consequence of his sense of unworthiness as expressed in v. 6. *Worthy to come unto thee.* This seems clearly to indicate, that the centurion did not himself see Jesus at all, or at least, not on the present occasion. *But say in a word.* "Give thy fiat at a word, or by word of mouth." Bloomfield. *Word* is here opposed to the actual presence of Jesus, which to a person of less faith would have been deemed necessary to the performance of the cure. *My servant*; literally, *my boy*, see N. on Matt. 8 : 6. The usual word for *slave* is found in vs. 2, 3.

8. *Set under authority.* In Matthew it is simply *under authority*, on which see Note. *And he doeth it.* This ready obedience, on the part of his servant, explains why he was so dear to his master (see v. 1). We are not, however, to assume from this, that the centurion had only one servant. He rather attributes to this servant, who was then lying sick, an obedience which was true, although perhaps in less de-

Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

11 ¶ And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a

gree, of all his servants. This preference to the sick servant, to the neglect of all mention of the others, has its explication in the principle, lying at the basis of the parable of the lost sheep 15 : 4, on which see Note.

9. *He marvelled at him*, i. e. he wondered at his faith and humility. *The people*, &c. A promiscuous multitude were following him to the centurion's house, some to receive a confirmation of their faith from his words and deeds, others, doubtless, from motives of mere curiosity. *I have not found*, &c. Literally, *not in Israel have I found so great faith.* The very same words and emphatic order of arrangement, are found in Matthew, on which see Note. It is worthy of remark, that our Lord unites with the elders in praising the centurion, but for qualities wholly unnoticed by them, viz. his faith and humility. The declaration made by Matthew in v: 11, is here omitted by Luke, but reported by him, as it was uttered on another occasion, 13 : 28, 29.

10. *They that were sent*, &c. This proves beyond a question, that the centurion did not come in person to meet Jesus. *Whole*, healthy, well; the literal meaning of the original.

11-17. THE RAISING OF THE WIDOW'S SON. *Nain.* Luke is the only one of the evangelists who reports this great miracle, as John alone reports the raising of Lazarus. Why such stupendous miracles should have been passed over,



city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the

only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

each by three evangelists, and neither of them reported by Matthew and Mark, appears to us strange and unaccountable. Our inability, however, to judge of the circumstances of each writer, and the specific design of the Spirit of inspiration, in guiding them to the selection of the topics to be respectively narrated, should prevent, on our part, any impeachment of their wisdom or integrity, in consequence of the omissions above referred to. Indeed, this very thing—so unlike what might have been expected from men dependent alone upon human judgment, and whose greatest delight would have been, to spread before their readers every particular of the stupendous miracles of Nain and Bethany—is one of the greatest arguments in favor of the divine origin of the gospels. This subject will be referred to again, in John 12: on which see Note.

11. *The day after*; literally, *the next*, the ellipsis of *day* being common to this form of expression. *Nain*. Robinson identifies this town, which has no mention elsewhere in the Bible, in the ruins of old buildings, a few miles south of Mount Tabor. It is remarked by Alford, that the town of this name spoken of by Josephus, is a different place, on the borders of Idumea. Webster and Wilkinson place its site at the foot of Mount Tabor, near Endor, about twelve miles from Capernaum. Its position on the Map (accompanying my Commentary on Matthew), a short distance S. W. of Endor, is undoubtedly correct. Since writing the above, I see that Thomson (Land & Book, vol. i. p. 158) locates it on the north-west corner of a mount, now called Jebel ed Dûhy, one hour's ride from the foot of Tabor, which it faces, a very beautiful valley lying between. The principal antiquities he declares to be its tombs, situated

mainly on the east of the village. This agrees with its position on my Map, as above referred to.

12. *Gate of the city*. Most of these towns and villages were walled, for the sake of protection. *A dead man*; literally, *one dead*, or *one who was dead*, the condition of the person being the object of thought. *Carried out* for burial. The burial of bodies within the town or city, was forbidden, and hence the sepulchres and tombs were commonly situated, without the limits of the cities and villages. *The only son*, and hence an object of the deepest love. Another heightening circumstance calling for sympathy, was the fact that his mother was a widow, and therefore dependent upon her son for comfort and support in her declining years. *Much people of the city, &c.* This large funeral was indicative of the public sympathy with the widow, in her bereavement.

13. *When the Lord saw her*. As our Lord passed along, seeing such a procession, and grief depicted on every countenance, he was affected with compassion, and approaching the bereaved widow, who as chief mourner followed the bier, he gently bid her cease weeping. It is quite unlikely that he had ever before seen her; a feature in this great miracle, which is wanting in the raising of Jairus' daughter and of Lazarus, the former of which miracles was wrought in answer to the urgent request of the father, the latter, in behalf of a family, with whom he was on terms of the most intimate friendship. This shows that no one, however estranged he may have been from Jesus, either through want of religious education, or from his own perverseness, need fear to approach him, and prefer in faith and love any request in behalf of himself or others. His sympathies are in

14 And he came and touched the bier : and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, *Arise*.

full and lively exercise for all our fallen race, and to all in affliction, who turn to him for comfort, he says as to this poor bereaved mother, *Weep no longer*, Rev. 21 : 4. *Had compassion*. This same verb is found in Matt. 9 : 36, on which see Note. The tears and lamentations of this widow arrested his attention, and as he gazed upon her, with difficulty supporting her steps in the sad procession, his bowels yearned with compassion, and he addressed her in words of comfort. She little thought that the voice of this stranger, which in such gentle tones bid her weep not, was potent enough to call back from the dead, the son, with whom all her hope and comfort in life was about to be buried. The word translated *weep*, is that which denotes the outward expression of grief. See N. on 6 : 21. The orientals gave vent to their sorrow, in loud shrieks and lamentations over the bodies of the dead. As if their own voices were too feeble to give full utterance to their emotions, they employed persons, whose office it was to sing dirges, and utter dolorous groans and lamentations. See N. on Matt. 9 : 23.

14. *He came*; literally, *having come* to the bier. This bier was an open frame, upon which the dead body, wrapped in folds of linen, was placed, and borne on the shoulders of four, and sometimes six persons, to the grave or tomb. Our Lord touched the bier, as an intimation for the bearers to stand still. Dr. Jahn from this passage thinks, that the bearers walked very fast on their way to the grave; but I hardly see the necessity of any such inference. Their movements must have been graduated to the ability of the mourners to keep pace with them, and we can hardly conceive that this widow, borne down under the weight of her crushing affliction, could have had physical ability to walk as fast as Dr.

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15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

b Ch. 8 : 54; John 11 : 43; Ac. 9 : 40; Ro. 4 : 17.

Jahn seems to think the procession moved. *They that bare him*; literally, *the (persons) bearing, the bearers*. *Stood still*; literally, *stood*. There must have been a dignity and air of authority in our Lord, to thus stop the procession by a simple gesture, or the mere laying his hand upon the bier. There is no need, however, of attributing this to any miraculous influence. *Young man*. This expression is used of those in the prime of manhood up to forty years of age. See N. on Matt. 19 : 22. But the circumstances here justify us in supposing this person to have been, in our sense of the term, a young man. *I say unto thee*. Stier thinks these words may have been added by Luke, as they are by Mark, 5 : 41 (compare Luke 8 : 54). Alford notices the words of power, with which all three raisings from the dead are wrought, "Damsel, arise;" "Young man, arise;" "Lazarus, come forth." All these forms are expressive of our Lord's own power to perform the act, and contrast strongly with the miracles performed by Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 17 : 20; 2 Kings 4 : 33), in which there was such intense prayer, and protracted efforts by physical contact, to infuse the vital principle into the dead bodies.

15. *He that was dead*; literally, *the dead* (man). The form is varied from the one used in v. 12, rendering it certain by two equivalent expressions, that death had actually taken place. The fact also, that the body was being conveyed to the grave, shows that it had been dead some hours. On the gradation of these stupendous miracles, see N. on Matt. 9 : 25. *Sat up*. This movement followed instantaneously the word of our Lord; and to show the completeness, as well as suddenness of the miracle, he began to speak to those around him. *He delivered him, &c.* There is something remarkable in this act, as though our Lord regarded the

16 'And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, 'That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, 'That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

c Ch. 1: 65. d Ch. 24: 19; John 4: 19; & 6: 14; & 9: 17. e Ch. 1: 68.

miracle incomplete, until he had delivered her son alive into the widow's hands. Its true solution is to be found in the sympathy which first drew him to the side of this woman with words of comfort, and which now sought the pleasure of restoring her son into her arms, and witnessing the joy with which she clasped her restored treasure. We must never forget in these stupendous miracles, that our Lord was truly a man, susceptible of all the emotions of joy, love, and compassion, which are incidental to humanity. Olshausen thinks that our Lord restored him to his mother, spiritually awakened also to a higher life, by means of which the mother's joy became more true and lasting. This is mere conjecture, but we may hope it to be founded on the truth of the case.

16. *Fear*, similar to that spoken of in 1: 65. *Glorified God*. See N. on Matt. 9: 8. *That a great prophet, &c.* The word *that*, should have been omitted in the English translation, for the reason given in N. on 7: 5. *A great prophet*. None but Elijah and Elisha, the greatest of the Old Testament prophets, had restored the dead to life. This miracle of our Lord, therefore, raised him at once, in the estimation of the people, to a rank equal, if not superior, to those great prophets. From the following clause, *God hath visited his people* (see N. on 1: 68, 78), it would seem, that this reappearance of a great prophet, after so long an interval, awakened hopes that the long-expected Messiah had come to deliver the nation from political servitude, and

18. ¶ 'And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

19 And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John the

f Mal. 11: 2.

restore it to its position of power and glory, which it had enjoyed under David, and others of its ancient kings.

17. *Rumor* that he was a great prophet, and probably the Messiah himself. Included in this general rumor was the report also, of the wondrous miracle which he had wrought in Nain. On this Olshausen remarks: "By individual flashes of his divine power like this, darting hither and thither, the Saviour aroused in the whole nation the consciousness, that great things were before them."

18-35. JOHN THE BAPTIST IN PRISON SENDS DISCIPLES TO JESUS. *Capernaum*. See Ns. on Matt. 11: 2-19. The agreement between Luke and Matthew is very exact, there being only a few slight verbal variations, enough to entitle them both to the position of independent writers. Verses 20, 21, in Luke are entirely omitted by Matthew, but without at all impairing or obscuring the sense. On the other hand, verses 14, 15 of Matthew are omitted by Luke.

18. *All these things*. In Matthew: *the works of Christ*. "The Messiah-works (of this Jesus)." Stier. The teachings of our Lord, as well as his miracles, are to be included. This was the second time, when John's disciples reported to him the increasing fame of Jesus. See N. on John 3: 25, 26.

19. *Calling unto him*. John was at this time in prison, but his disciples seem to have had free access to him. So far as the account of Luke is concerned, we should be ignorant of the fact of John's imprisonment. *Look we*

Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight.

22 \* Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; \* how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, \* to the poor the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

24 \* And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

g Mat. 11: 5.    h Isa. 35: 5.  
i Ch. 4: 18.    k Mat. 11: 7.

for another? "Is it another we are looking for?" Webster and Wilkinson. But see N. on Matt. 11: 3.

20, 21. These verses, as above remarked, are not found in Matthew. *In that same hour* (i. e., time), when John's disciples came to Jesus with this inquiry. *Plagues*. See N. on Mark 3: 10. Some include palsies and leprosies under this term, but it seems to refer to more violent and active diseases. *And of evil spirits*. The reason why these demoniacs are classed with those suffering from bodily sicknesses, is referred to in N. on 6: 18. See also N. on Matt. 4: 24. *He gave sight*; literally, *granted* (as a matter of grace and favor) *the* (power) *to see*. The original is highly expressive of the free and gracious exercise of power, with which he restored sight to the blind.

28. *A greater prophet*. The word *prophet* is not found in the parallel pas-

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is *he*, of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, "being baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and law-

l Mal. 3: 1.  
m Mat. 8: 5; ch. 8: 12.

sage in Matthew. The insertion here adapts the narrative to the Gentiles, for whom Luke's gospel was written. It would have been unnecessary to have styled him a prophet, in a gospel written for the Jewish Christians. The same principle will account in part, for the varieties in the following verses.

29, 30. These verses are apparently a parenthesis, but I cannot agree with Alford, that they are here transposed from their proper place in some other portion of the gospels. The connection is obvious and natural. The words are not those of Luke, but of our Lord, and serve to confirm, as well as explain, the assertion of v. 28. It will be seen by a comparison of Luke with Matthew, that while the latter has omitted these words of Luke, he has introduced vs. 12-15 (not found in Luke), in which he speaks of the great efforts which were then being made, to take as it were by

yers rejected \* the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

31 And the Lord said, \* Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and say-

\* Ac. 20 : 27. o Mat. 11 : 16.

violence the kingdom of heaven. Now this passage in Luke pre-supposes some such words as are inserted by Matthew, about the efforts of men to avail themselves of the Messianic blessings, and those attending the preaching of the Forerunner. As a natural sequence of this universal eagerness to hear the gospel message, we have recorded in Luke the different estimate placed upon the teachings and doctrine of the new dispensation, by the rich and honorable, and by those who were held in low repute. The people who flocked to hear the gospel message, even the publicans, approved (*justified*, regarded as just and good) the wisdom and goodness of God, in sending such a messenger as John, and testified their approbation, by receiving baptism at his hands. But the Pharisees and lawyers *rejected the counsel* (i. e. purpose, plan) *of God against themselves* (i. e. to their own hurt), and showed their contempt of his messenger, by refusing to receive from John the rite of baptism. Thus by taking Matthew and Luke together, a plain and well-connected train of thought is made out, and we are not reduced to the necessity of regarding these verses in Luke, as disjointed and out of their proper place in the narrative. Webster and Wilkinson regard vs. 29, 30, as Luke's own words, introduced to show the effect of our Lord's attestation of John's character. *That heard him*, they would render on *hearing this*, i. e. our Lord's declaration in v. 28. So also they take *justified*, in the sense of *praised*, and *rejected*, as

ing, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

33 For \* John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say,

p Mat. 8 : 4; Ma. 1 : 6; ch. 1 : 15.

equivalent to *railed at*, *despised*. But this interpretation, which is substantially that of Stier, gives a less weighty and appropriate sense than the other mode of interpretation. The proof of its correctness drawn from the words, *and the Lord said*, in v. 31, which are claimed to show that the preceding verses are the words of Luke, is of little weight, since if those words are not a gloss, they only serve to introduce with emphasis, a new division or turn of thought. It is remarkable that in both verses, the being or not being baptized by John, is put as evidence of their approval or disapproval of God's scheme, in sending such a messenger as John before Christ.

31. *The men of this generation*. Matthew: *this generation*. Luke also adds: *to what are they like?* as though it were difficult to select an object with which to compare them, so as to bring out fully their fickle, inconstant, and perverse character. *Ye have not wept*, i. e. united with us in wailing. See N. on Matt. 11 : 17, where the words rendered in our common version, *ye have not lamented*, literally signifies, *ye have not beaten yourselves*, as was done at funerals with loud expressions of grief.

33, 34. *He hath a demon*. See N. on Matt. 11 : 18; John 10 : 20. *Eating and drinking*. It is erroneous to force upon this the notion of excessive indulgence. The simple idea is, that the Son of man came eating and drinking, like other men, and did not practise the austerity and abstemiousness of John. He was to be the type of hu-

Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 'But wisdom is justified of all her children.

36 ¶ And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would

q Mat. 11: 19.  
r Mat. 26: 6; Ma. 14: 8; John 11: 2.

manity in its usual aspect, not as it appeared in asceticism on the one hand, nor sensual indulgence on the other. *Behold a gluttonous man, &c.* See N. on Matt. 11: 19. *A friend of publicans, &c.* The allusion is to the oriental custom of regarding the act of eating and drinking with a person, as a pledge of inviolate friendship. Hence, as our Lord had frequently partaken of the hospitality of these publicans, he was charged with being their friend. For the full explanation of this passage, see N. on Matthew, as above referred to.

86-50. JESUS' FEET ANOINTED BY A PENITENT WOMAN. *Capernaum.* This incident is related only by Luke. In some respects, however, it is similar to the anointing of Jesus' feet by Mary, as narrated in Matt. 26: 7; Mark 14: 3; John 12: 3, but must not be confounded with that event. The name of the person who entertained Jesus, happens to be the same in both instances; but the Simon of Bethany was a very different man from the one here mentioned, whose pride, unbelief, and neglect of some of the most common courtesies of hospitality, called forth from Jesus so touching a rebuke. Nor can this woman, who seems to have been of notoriously bad reputation, be identical with the Mary of Bethany who had sat at Jesus' feet, and by her gentle confiding love, had won so strong a hold upon his affections (see 10: 38-42). To these may be added a third reason for considering the two incidents as distinct and separate, viz. the illustration in vs. 41, 42, which would have been out of place in such a company of believers as the one at Bethany. Taking all these things into consideration, I cannot doubt that reference is had to

eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment,

two distinct events. Indeed, if we assume the contrary, we must regard Luke as having distorted the great facts of the occasion, and, as Olshausen remarks, having placed it entirely out of its proper connection.

86. *One*, an indefinite form of expression. The name of this person is withheld, as a matter of little consequence. So also is that of the woman who anointed our Lord's feet. The object of relating this incident, was not to condemn or praise particular individuals, but to bring out a great principle. As it regards the man so indefinitely alluded to, he seems to have been a person of note, who desired to do something to call attention to himself, by appearing as a sort of patron to this Jesus, whose words and deeds were ringing through the land. On the other hand, he seems to have taken care, by a studied neglect of the ordinary courtesies with which a guest was received, not to compromise himself, so as to appear in any respect a follower of Jesus. *Sat down*, i. e. *reclined*, according to the oriental custom at meals.

37. *A woman in the city.* This is considered by the ancient interpreters to have been Mary of Magdala, commonly called Mary Magdalene. But Luke speaks of this person in 8: 2, as though he had never before mentioned her. The reference there to her possession by demons, does not at all imply that she was an adulteress or prostitute. The great injustice done the memory of this female, by the use of her patrilial name, to designate persons of her sex, who have been rescued by the hand of Christian benevolence, from a life of infamy, is noticed in N. on Mark 16: 9. The article in *the city*,

38 And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

seems to refer it to the city of our Lord's residence, Capernaum. There are some however who refer the article to the city in which the woman had her residence, and where our Lord is supposed to have been then staying. The translation would then be: *a woman, who was in the city, a sinner.* Others give this turn: *who was a sinner in the city*, i. e. known as such in the place, carrying on a sinful occupation in the place. *Which was a sinner*, the old form for *who was*, &c. Some take the imperfect here in the sense of the perfect, *who had been a sinner.* But if we suppose that, up to this time, she had lived in sin, but now was penitent, the imperfect is the very tense required, *she was a sinner*, but at the time here spoken of, gave evidence that she was in a penitent state, and about to begin a reformed life. The word *sinner* receives such emphasis from its connection here, that it is by most commentators understood of a prostitute. This is rendered still more probable from the insinuation of the Pharisee in v. 39. Trollope thinks that the term means only that she was a heathen, a sense so commonly attached to the word in the New Testament. *When she knew*, &c. This shows that her heart had been touched, by some previous attendance upon our Lord's ministry, inasmuch as she made these preparations for anointing Jesus' feet, after she learned that he was in the Pharisee's house. The usual reclining position at the table, furnished her a favorable opportunity to anoint his feet, while her timid humility would have pronounced her unfit to touch any other part of his sacred person. *Alabaster box of ointment.* See N. on Matt. 26:7.

38. *Stood at his feet behind him.* His reclining position upon his left side, his head supported by the left arm, would

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, 'This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what man-

s Ch. 15: 2.

of necessity bring his feet somewhat behind his back, and away from the table, so that the woman must have stood behind him, in order to touch them as here narrated. See N. on Matt. 23: 6. *Weeping* tears of penitence and love. *To wash*; better and more literal, *to wet, moisten.* The word is used of rain, or any fluid falling in drops. Her tears, as she was performing her pious office of anointing his feet, began to flow, and as they fell upon his feet, she wiped them away with her long tresses, kissing at the same time his sacred feet. The depth of love and penitence here manifested, can only be appreciated by those, who have themselves felt the burden of sin, and subsequent pardon and peace through faith in an atoning Saviour. *With tears*; literally, *with the tears* which she shed. *Kissed.* The word in the original signifies, *to kiss fondly or frequently, to caress*, and is here strongly expressive of the depth of the love which led her to kiss his feet again and again. *Anointed them with the ointment.* That which she had before used in self-adornment, she now pours out upon the feet of her Lord, as a token of her love, and a pledge that hereafter, her chiefest beauty and ornament were to be a meek, penitent, and believing spirit.

39. *Now*; literally, *but*, the contrast being strongly marked between the overflowing tenderness and love of the woman, and the self-righteous and censorious spirit of the Pharisee. *When the Pharisee saw it*; literally, *the Pharisee having seen it.* The Greek construction throws the principal emphasis on the verb *spake*. The act of seeing was not strange or improper, but the contrast between him and the woman lay in the thoughts which arose in his mind, when he beheld her pious act. Hence the act of seeing takes the par-

ner of woman *this is* that touched him; for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering said

ticipial, and that of the censorious self-communing, the verbal form. *Which had bidden him*; literally, *the one who bade him* to the entertainment. This is added to give definiteness to the word *Pharisee*, and also prominence to the great idea, which underlies this whole passage, that external honor and homage are worthless, unless accompanied with a sense of ill-desert, and a penitent, believing spirit. *He spake within himself*, i. e. thoughts of this kind passed through his mind. *If he were a prophet*. This hypothesis is so expressed in the original, as to strongly imply, that our Lord was not a prophet, in the estimation of the Pharisee. This was inferred from his apparent want of that supernatural knowledge, which every true prophet might be supposed to possess. The unbelief of the Pharisee in the divine mission of Jesus, here clearly evinces itself. *Who and what manner of woman, &c.* For a woman of such abandoned character to touch one, was regarded as the highest species of defilement. Hence the Pharisee judged, that Jesus was unacquainted with her character, or he would never have permitted her to touch him, much less to remain at his feet, kissing them, and continuing to evince her love for him by such personal manifestations. He was an utter stranger to the great truth, that the slightest contact with Christ would render the person, however polluted with moral defilement from previously committed offences, meet for the holy companionship and worship of heaven itself. *For she is a sinner*. Some take *for* in the sense of *inasmuch as*, but it is better to give the original word its demonstrative sense, *that she is*, &c. The clause would then be explanatory of the preceding words, thus: *who and what manner of woman this is* (viz.) *that she is a sinner*. If any prefer however the common translation, it is to be explained as elliptical, *for she is a sinner*, and he would have

unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

ordered her away. It would thus denote the reason why Jesus could not be a true prophet, admitting, as he did, so vile a woman to come in personal contact with him.

40. The condescension of our Lord, in disabusing this Pharisee of his erroneous notions, shows that they resulted from mistaken views of what constituted ceremonial uncleanness, rather than from malignant opposition of the heart. *Answering* to what was passing in the mind of this Pharisee. Some think that he had betrayed his inward thoughts, by a countenance expressive of disgust, or some repellant gesture, as the woman was performing her pious service. But the particularity and directness of our Lord's reply, show that he was indebted to no such manifestation of this man's thoughts. *Simon, I have, &c.* The directness and formality of the address, not only bespoke the Pharisee's earnest attention, but served in the end to show him, how clearly the thoughts of his heart had all been laid open to Jesus. Stier regards this opening address as closely bordering upon the humble modesty of the guest, as if he intended to say: "with your leave, my host, I would like to say a word." But his holy office, as Prophet, does not permit him to express himself literally in these terms. The original is very brief and emphatic: *I have to thee something to say*, (shall I say it?) *Master* (teacher), *say on*. Alford contrasts this with the preceding words: *this* (slightly contemptuous). See N. on Matt. 26: 61) *man* (not expressed in the original), *if he were a prophet*, showing that our Lord's appeal to the inner thoughts of the heart, call forth at once a reply, much more respectful than might have been anticipated from his previous state of mind. There was doubtless a solemnity of tone and countenance, with which Jesus addressed him, which flashed conviction into his mind, that his very heart was open to the inspec-



41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

tion of one, whose claims as a true prophet, he was that very moment denying, by imputing to him ignorance of the character of the woman who stood at his feet.

41. The parable which our Lord now proposes for the instruction of this self-righteous Pharisee, is based on this simple and well-acknowledged fact, that the amount of love and gratitude awakened by the conferral of a favor, will be proportionate to its magnitude. This is clearly shown in the question and reply in v. 48. Many difficulties, however, have been started in the interpretation of the parable, which will be referred to in their proper place. *There was a certain creditor, &c.* As the words stand in the original: *two debtors were to a certain creditor*, the emphatic position being given to the *two debtors*. The word *creditor*, literally signifies a *lender of money*, and is found only here in the New Testament, although the cognate verb occurs in 6:34; Matt. 5:

42. *The one owed five hundred pence* (i. e. \$75 00, see N. on Matt. 18:28; 20:2), *and the other fifty* (\$7 50). In its application to the sinner, this is to be taken in a subjective sense, that is, as it is estimated by him; not in an objective sense, as it appears in the sight of God. No finite mind can measure the turpitude of the least offence, when viewed in relation to God's infinitely holy law. But inasmuch as their love is declared to be proportionate to their sense of obligation, there must have been some standard of measurement, to indicate the comparative depth of their indebtedness to the divine compassion. One man feels that he has been a great sinner, and that much has been forgiven him. His love is proportionably great. Another has a less vivid sense of his obligations. His life has been one of strict morality. He cannot look back upon such an array of open and high-handed transgres-

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

sions of God's law. He feels that he has been a debtor, and has received forgiveness, but as his sins have been less glaring, his sense of ill desert is less vivid and abasing. He owed fifty pence, and it has been freely forgiven. His love is awakened by such unmerited kindness, but falls short of his who can look back, as did Paul (1 Tim. 1:13-15), upon the horrible pit and miry clay (Ps. 40:2), from which, by the sovereign grace of God, he has been extricated. This is the point of the parable. Our Lord intended to teach the Pharisee, that as debtors, he and the woman stood in the same relation to God; that a debt of five hundred pence could be forgiven as easily and freely, as the tenth part of that sum; and that the abundant evidence which this woman gave of her deep love and gratitude, showed that God's abounding grace had been manifested in the forgiveness of her sin, which she felt to be so great.

42. *When they had nothing to pay.* In the sight of God, it is as insuperable an obstacle in the way of legal justification, to owe five hundred or even fifty pence, as though the debtor, as in Matt. 18:24, owed ten thousand talents with nothing to pay. In the application of both these parables, therefore, we are taught the utter impossibility of satisfying the claims of God's righteous law, or of doing any thing which will render the pardon of sin other than wholly gratuitous. Alford well remarks that, as their incapacity to pay could not well have been known to the creditor, except on their own avowal, here in the application of the parable, "is the *sense and confession* of sin; not a bare objective fact followed by a decree of forgiveness—but the incapacity is an avowed one—the forgiveness is a personal one." *Frankly forgave.* The English translation hardly reaches the full sense of the original, which is that he forgave or remitted their debt, as a

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he*, to whom he for-

freely bestowed act of grace, without any regard to the good or ill desert of the debtors. Favor, kindness, benevolence, compassion, are the sole basis of the act, all merit on the part of the recipient being excluded. The fact that in the parable both these debtors were forgiven, has led some to think that the Pharisee had been laid under some obligation to Jesus, for a previous act of favor. However this may have been, his spirit and temper on this occasion, shows that he was a stranger, both to the sense of personal ill desert, and the joy of pardoned sin, which possessed and agitated the bosom of the woman, whom he so much despised. Stier refers the pardon, which the Pharisee shared with the woman by the terms of the parable, to that spoken of in 2 Cor. 5:19. But is there not, in the pardon of the woman, something more than a participation in the general blessings of the atonement, by which God is reconciling the world unto himself? Did she not receive a full and special pardon of sin, and become at this time an heir of salvation? Can we safely infer from the parable, that the Pharisee had been or was now brought into such a state of penitent submission, that he in like manner was a sharer in the grace of God? We think not. The parable is not to be thus interpreted, in face of all its surroundings, which teach the very contrary. The illustration points rather to the comparative want of attention, manifested on the part of the Pharisee to Jesus, which arose from the feeble sense of obligation under which he lay to him, as a public teacher, or one from whom he, or some of his friends, had received a favor. This want of respect, although rebuked in the parable, does not constitute its central point, as may be seen by the preceding remarks. *Tell me therefore, &c.* Our Lord would leave the decision, as to the comparative love of these debtors, to the Pharisee himself, who would thus be brought to pronounce on his

gave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

own case. In the parable of the Good Samaritan (10:30-37), in like manner, he made the lawyer furnish the reply to his own question, as to who was his neighbor.

43. *I suppose.* The word in the original corresponds to our familiar expression *I take it*, i. e. I receive it into my mind, I think, suppose. The Pharisee's reply indicates a descent from his lofty and arrogant tone in the outset (v. 39). *Thou hast rightly judged.* We may here interpose a caution against the erroneous inference, that a vile and notorious sinner, when brought into a state of penitence and belief in Christ, will of necessity surpass in self-sacrificing love, one whose external conduct has been so correct, that little or no outward change is seen in him, when converted to God. This is not the point of the parable. It is simply that the child of grace, who has a vivid sense of sin—for as we have shown (Note on v. 42) this debt is not to be regarded in an objective but subjective view, not as it appears in relation to God, but as it is regarded by the sinner himself—will have a deeper and more abiding sense of his obligations for divine forgiveness, than one whose spiritual vision is so dim, that he has a very slight sense of his sin and ill desert. This clear perception of sin, and the dreadful doom which it deserves, is often found in persons who, like Bunyan and Newton, have been vile and open offenders; but it is also seen, and perhaps with equal if not greater frequency, in persons whose external deportment has been, like that of Brainard, Martyn, and others, correct from their youth upward. It is the lively sense of sin and its consequences, which calls forth gratitude in view of God's pardoning love. In the sight of God, this woman was no greater sinner than the proud and self-righteous Pharisee. But the view which she took of her own lost and ruined condition, was so deep and abasing, that in her own estimation, she was one of the vilest

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and

wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss. but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

offenders against God, and hence the forgiveness of her sins called forth expressions of the deepest love.

44. *And he turned* (literally, *having turned*) *to the woman*, who was behind him. A slight change in his reclining posture would enable him to do this. *Seest thou this woman?* Our Lord now confronts the neglect of the Pharisee, with the assiduous attention of the woman, and places in striking contrast their treatment of him. The question was designed to call the attention of the Pharisee, to the application of the parable. He had mentally censured both the woman as a notorious sinner, and Jesus, who had permitted himself to be approached by one in such ill repute. Now having been brought to decide the principle, which lay at the basis of the parable, he is bid to look at the woman, that he might the better see how false was the conclusion to which he had come, respecting their comparative claim upon our Lord's regard. *I entered into thine house*, as thy invited guest. This established his claims to be treated with the common courtesy with which guests were received. Webster and Wilkinson say that Simon should not be considered as guilty of disrespect, in not paying these attentions, as it was not a regular feast, but only a mid-day repast. But is there not an implied rebuke in this rehearsal of the ceremonies omitted by the Pharisee, which shows that they were observed, to a greater or less extent, at all meals to which strangers were invited? *Thou gavest*, &c. As the Orientals wore no stockings, and their sandals were open, their feet would of necessity become dusty and soiled, and the first thing, therefore, on entering a house, was to lay aside their sandals, and wash their feet. This was the office of the lowest servants (see N. on

Matt. 8 : 11), but if the guest was a person of consequence, the master of the family performed this office. This most common mark of civility to Jesus had been at this time omitted, as Olshausen thinks, because the Pharisee thought the invitation itself a sufficient honor, and the practice was not an invariable one. *She hath washed*, &c. The tokens of affection and respect conferred upon Jesus by the woman, are placed in beautiful and striking contrast, with the want of courtesy on the part of the Pharisee. Her position behind Jesus, did not prevent his Omniscient eye from beholding all the circumstances of the act. By recounting them, he convinces the Pharisee, that he has all the marks of a true prophet, which he had demanded in his censorious thoughts (v. 39).

45. *Thou gavest me no kiss*. "A kiss was the usual salutation on entrance, or as soon as the person was made comfortable." Bloomfield. On the other hand, Webster and Wilkinson aver that this does not appear to have been one of the usual ceremonies at Jewish entertainments. Bengel thinks that our Lord's face was never thus saluted, save by the kiss of the betrayer. But when the oriental custom of salutation by a kiss, so common and universally prevalent, is regarded, we cannot think that our Lord was made an exception to this custom, in his intercourse with men. The words here seem clearly to imply, that such a salutation was expected by Jesus, and its omission was noticed by him. Besides, we can hardly think that Judas would have dared to salute him in this way, had he not followed a custom, which he had often seen practised towards Jesus by his intimate friends. *Since the time I came in*. This shows that it was almost immediately after he reclined at the table,

46 'My head with oil thou didst not anoint : but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

† Ps. 23 : 5.      \* 1 TL. 1 : 14.

that this woman began to evince her great love for him, in the manner here described. She probably entered in the train of Jesus, otherwise Simon would not have admitted her into his house. Stier objects to this, the words of v. 37, *when she heard that Jesus sat at meat*. But this without straining the point, may be referred to the time of the invitation, between which and the actual entrance of our Lord into the Pharisee's house, some little time might elapse, enough to enable the woman to make preparations for her pious task. If any one chooses the other view, then the words *since the time*, &c. must be taken in the sense of *nearly since the time*, &c.

46. *Mine head*, &c. The contrast between *head* and *feet*, *oil* and *ointment* (literally, *myrrh*), is here very striking. The neglect of Simon to bestow the most common tokens of civility, is here placed against the very highest honor which it was in the power of the woman to bestow. *Hath anointed my feet*, not presuming in her humility to anoint his sacred head. The ointment was of the most costly and precious kind, and this enhanced the value of the offering, it not being thought too good to be poured out upon the feet of our Lord.

47. *Wherefore* introduces this verse, as the conclusion drawn from the foregoing points of contrast. *Her sins*. Not merely those which were open and scandalous, but all which she had ever committed. Christ never forgives in part the repentant sinner. The pardon is most ample, covering the sins of a whole life. The presence of the article in the original, refers these sins to those alluded to in v. 39, as though it had been written: 'These many sins, of which you say she is guilty, are all forgiven.' The words, *which are many*, concede to the Pharisee, that the woman was a great sinner; but those which

47 \* *Wherefore* I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven ; for she loved much : but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

follow in the same breath, *are forgiven*, teach him that the sins of the vilest can be remitted, when they approach Christ, as did this woman, with tears of penitence and love. *For she loved much*. The word *for* in this connection has not the sense *because*, but *inasmuch as*; and the idea is, that evidence is furnished by her excessive love, that she has received that forgiveness which alone produces such love. The existence of the cause is proved from that of the effect. Love to Christ in this and every case, implies forgiveness, and great love, such as this woman manifested, argues a deep and vivid sense of the greatness of the debt which has been remitted. *But to whom little*, &c. Olshausen well remarks, that the contrast is still pursued between the Pharisee and the woman, since these words imply, *to thee little* (in your estimation) *is forgiven, since thou lovest little*, which, out of polite and prudent considerateness, was expressed in the more general terms here given. We must continually guard against supposing that the Pharisee's sins were really small. As has been remarked (N. on v. 41), the sins of both these persons are referred to, as they appeared to themselves, and not according to their intrinsic demerit in the sight of a holy God. The one was bowed down with such a sense of guilt, that her sins appeared immeasurably great; the other had so faint a view of his depravity of heart, that forgiveness of sin, on the supposition that it had been granted him (see N. on v. 42), was a trivial affair, awakening little if any gratitude, in his bosom. We are taught clearly in this parable, that forgiveness is not the effect of love, but that love follows forgiveness, for had the opposite been taught, the clauses would have been reversed, so as to read, *he who loveth little, to the same little is forgiven*.

48 And he said unto her, 'Thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, 'Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman,

o Mat. 9: 2; Ma. 9: 5.

y Mat. 9: 8; Ma. 9: 7.

48. *He said unto her, &c.* Her sins had been previously forgiven, but she is now confirmed and reassured. This was requisite for her peace and comfort, which must have well-nigh fled, when she saw the severe countenance of the Pharisee turned upon her, and found herself the object of such painful notoriety. Thus Christ oftentimes reveals himself to the sinking, drooping soul, as an Almighty Saviour, giving personal assurance of forgiveness and protection. But, as Webster and Wilkinson remark, we are not to infer from this, that no one is in a state of forgiveness or safety, who has not such a lively and personal assurance. It may be necessary to the discipline of the soul, that the full evidence of its acceptance with God should be withheld for a time, and the believer be compelled to cry out frequently in the depths of his distress, Lord, save me, or I perish.

49. *They that sat, &c.* This refers to the Pharisee and his friends, who at this formal and authoritative pronouncement of forgiveness of sin, which they justly regarded as the prerogative of God only, were amazed, and either in their thoughts, or in low tones to one another, began to inquire, *who is this, &c.* Alford thinks that this was said, not in a hostile, but reverential spirit; but Doddridge takes it in an inimical sense, which the context seems to justify. *Sins also.* A better translation would be, *even sins*, the contrast being between the display of his power in curing physical infirmities (v. 21), and the greater exercise of it in the forgiveness of sin, which was God's sole prerogative.

50. *Thy faith hath saved thee.* It

'Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

## CHAPTER VIII.

AND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching

o Mat. 9: 23; Ma. 5: 34; & 10: 53; ch. 8: 49; & 18: 42.

was her faith in our Lord's power and readiness to forgive sin, which brought her to him for pardon. Hence as a means, it was that which secured for her the blessing of forgiveness. See N. on Matt. 20: 34. *Go in peace.* See N. on Mark 5: 34. These repeated assurances of forgiveness, evince the compassionate tenderness of our Lord towards this poor, despised, broken-hearted woman. She seems to have lingered in the presence of Jesus, until she was dismissed with the full assurance of pardon and peace. Henceforth we doubt not, that she was among the foremost, in that noble band of females, who followed Jesus from Galilee, and who, with courageous and sympathizing love, attended him at his crucifixion (23: 49, 55; Matt. 27: 55, 56; Mark 15: 40, 41). This incident opens a rich mine of spiritual comfort to those depressed and broken-hearted in consequence of sin, and also furnishes a test of Christian experience, in the love with which the soul is drawn out to Christ, in view of his mercy and forgiveness. Stier closes his remarks on this interesting and instructive incident as follows: "Our Lord has approached here the believing sinner, and enriched her in the four general steps prefigurative of how he will deal with others: He first silently received her approach; then he turned upon her the light of his countenance; next he addressed specially to her the word of assurance; and last of all, he sent her again into the world in the peace of faith."

## CHAPTER VIII.

1-8. JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES MAKE A SECOND CIRCUIT IN GALILEE. This passage is peculiar to Luke. Olshausen

and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God : and the twelve *were* with him,

2 And \*certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits

a Mat. 27 : 55, 56.

says, that this description in general terms of the ministry of Jesus, introduces us to the parables, which are narrated in 11 : 14, 15, 17-23; Matt. 12 : 22-37; Mark 3 : 19-30.

1. *Every city, &c.* The original has a distributive sense, *through city and village by village*, on his tour. This passage shows how abundant were the labors of our Lord. In the short space of his ministry, he made three circuits through all the more important towns in Galilee, besides his visits to Jerusalem at the passover feasts, and his labors for several months in Perea (see N. on Matt. 19 : 1). Many places, however, he was unable personally to visit, and these he reached through the ministry of his apostles (9 : 2; Matt. 10 : 5; Mark 6 : 7), and disciples (10 : 1). All this shows how earnest and indefatigable were his efforts to proclaim the great truths of the gospel in the hearing of all the people. *Preaching and showing, &c.* No essential difference is to be sought in these words, as they are used to give emphatic fulness to the expression. The former word refers literally to a proclamation made by a crier; the latter, to the declaration of good news. This message of salvation was proclaimed in the most public and open manner, and was thus strongly opposed to the exclusive character of the Pharisaic instruction, which disregarded the poor and degraded, and was confined principally to the rich and powerful.

2. *Certain women.* These persons are referred to again in 23 : 55; 24 : 10; and the names of some given (see Matt. 27 : 56; Mark 15 : 40). They seem to have been attached to the company of Jesus and his disciples, by having been the subjects of remarkable cures. Their love and devotion to him were mani-

and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, \*out of whom went seven devils,

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Su-

b Ma. 16 : 9.

festated in the time of his passion, when amidst the jeers and imprecations of the crowd, they followed him, a weeping company, to the cross, and remained through the whole sad scene, to cheer and comfort him, as far as they might be permitted to do so, by his brutal persecutors. *Infirmities* so inveterate as to be beyond the power of the healing art, and the cure of which was therefore miraculous. *Mary called Magdalene*, i. e. Mary of Magdala (see Matt. 15 : 39), the patrial name being given to distinguish her from the other Marys in attendance on our Lord's ministry. A great interest has ever attached itself to this female, from the fact which we learn here of her previous distressed condition, and the distinguished honor she enjoyed in being one, to whom Jesus made his appearance on the morning of his resurrection. The courage and devotion which she together with her female friends manifested, in attending our Lord to the cross, and in venturing to do funeral honors to his body, as it lay in the tomb guarded by Roman soldiers, has been alluded to in N. on v. 1. In regard to the injustice done to her memory, in supposing her to have been, before conversion, a prostitute, see N. on Mark 16 : 9. *Out of whom, &c.* In Mark 16 : 9, it is plainly asserted what is here implied, that Jesus cast out these demons. On the indefinite use of the word *seven*, see N. on Matt. 12 : 45. Instances of the same use of the word in the Old Testament, may be found in Ruth 4 : 15 : 1 Sam. 2 : 5; Isa. 4 : 1.

3. *Joanna the wife of Chuza.* The connection shows that this woman had been cured by our Lord, of some distressing malady, if not, as some think, of demoniacal possession. She is again mentioned in 24 : 10. *Herod's steward,*

sanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

4 ¶ And when much people

c Mat. 13: 2; Ma. 4: 1.

i. e. the manager of his household or private affairs. See N. on Matt. 20: 8. This Herod was Herod Antipas (see N. on Matt. 2: 22), of whom some think that Chuza had been the guardian during his minority. He was evidently a man of note, and his wife must have been able to contribute largely to the support of Jesus and his followers, especially while in Judea, where few comparatively would be found to tender them the rites of hospitality without remuneration. *Susanna*, not mentioned by name elsewhere, but doubtless one of the noble band, to whose devotion and constancy in the time of his passion, reference has been made in the comments on v. 2. *Who ministered unto him, &c.* This shows that others of them besides Joanna, were persons of some means, and that they furnished essential aid to Jesus, at least in the latter period of his ministry, by thus administering to his daily wants. See N. on Matt. 27: 55. What interest is attached to this brief declaration, lifting up, as it does, the veil from our Lord's more private and personal matters, and showing his condescension, in permitting himself to be dependent on the daily bounty of these pious women, while possessed of that creative power, which at a word so magnified a few loaves and fishes, as to suffice for the wants of the thousands who partook of the miraculous repast. So Olshausen: "He who supported the spiritual life of his people, did not disdain to be supported by them bodily. He was not ashamed to descend to so deep a poverty, that he lived on the charities of love. It was only others whom he fed miraculously; for himself, he lived upon the love of his people." *Their substance*; literally, *things on hand, possessions, property*. Bengel says: "The mention of these women is the great reward of their liberality; but at that

were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:

5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell

time doubtless many regarded them as infatuated."

4-18. PARABLE OF THE SOWER. *Lake of Galilee*. See N. on Matt. 13: 1-23; Mark 4: 1-25. A comparison will show that Mark has the most fulness of detail, and Luke, the least. The great points of the parable are found in all, and yet the three evangelists should here be read in connection, in order to obtain a clear and connected view of this important scripture. This will be seen by any one, who will compare v. 6 in Luke, with vs. 5, 6 in Matthew and Mark. The commentary is so full in the parallel portion in Matthew, that such points only will be noted, as are peculiar to Luke, or suggested by his narrative of the parable. Luke with Mark rightly places this parable before the stilling of the tempest, the cure of the demoniacs of Gadara, and the raising of Jairus' daughter.

4. *And when much people, &c.* Literally, *and much people* (i. e. great numbers) *flocking together and coming to him from every city*. This gives vividness and force to the parable, that it was spoken in view of the great numbers, pouring in from every quarter to hear his words. Webster and Wilkinson translate the second clause: *composed of those who from every city were coming unto him*. But this clause is not dependent upon the other, but is co-ordinate and emphatic: *even those coming to him from every city*, the expression being slightly exaggerative. *Every city*; literally, *city by city, one city after another*. See N. on v. 1. *By a parable*. Luke narrates only one, but others are added in Matthew and Mark.

5. *His seed*; literally, *the seed* from which he expected his usual harvest. This is omitted in Matthew and Mark, the verb *to sow* being used absolutely. *Was trodden down* by travellers passing along the road. This incident of the

by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit a hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried,

parable is found only in Luke, and serves to show the unproductiveness of seed, falling in a place so unfavorable for its growth, as a hard-beaten path or highway.

6. *Upon a rock.* This explains what is designated in Matthew and Mark by *stony places* and *stony ground*, reference being had, not to a field abounding in small stones or pebbles, but to one, underneath which were large flat rocks, covered with a thin surface of earth, which prevented the seed from having any depth of root. *As soon as, &c.* According to the other evangelists, who report this parable, this seed sprang up speedily, on account of its having to pass through so thin a covering of earth, and being kept warm by the radiation of heat from the rock beneath. Luke says nothing about the thinness of the soil, although it is implied in the words, *lacked moisture*.

8. *An hundredfold.* Luke designates the largest increase only. It is noticeable that Matthew and Mark, who give the varied increase, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold, do this in reversed order, the former, descending from the highest to the lowest increase, the latter, from the lowest to the highest. This shows that no importance is to be attached to such minute diversities, they being incidental to writers, who are not servile copyists one from another. *He cried.* The tense in the original gives this shade: *he exclaimed,*

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 'And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; 'that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11 'Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

*d* Mat. 13: 10; Ma. 4: 10. *e* Is. 6: 9; Ma. 4: 12. *f* Mat. 13: 18; Ma. 4: 14.

as he often did, when he had uttered some important and mighty truth. The verb also implies an utterance in loud and distinct tones, so that all could hear. See N. on Matt. 11: 15.

10. *Mysteries of the kingdom of God,* i. e., things respecting the Messianic kingdom, which were enigmatical or unintelligible to the people at large. Webster and Wilkinson: "truths which cannot be known until they are revealed, not truths which must always be unintelligible." See N. on Matt. 13: 11. *But to others in parables.* The ellipsis is supplied in Mark: "but to them that are without, all those things are done in parables." The word translated *the others*, literally signifies, *those left, the rest*, referring here to persons other than the apostles and disciples, to whom it had been given to understand those divine mysteries, and who were round about him, as he stood preaching from the ship. *In parables,* stands opposed here to the open revelation of the mysteries, just spoken of, and is therefore to be taken in the sense of dark and obscure sayings. I cannot, however, think, that the object of our Lord, in pronouncing these parables, was to confirm the people in their judicial blindness. A more merciful design must be attributed to Him, who came to seek and to save them that were lost.

11. *The parable is this,* i. e. this is the interpretation of the parable. See



**12** Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

Gen. 40 : 12. *Is the word of God.* The word is here put generically for the various modes, in which the seeds of truth are sown in the heart, although the great instrumentality employed in bringing men to Christ, is the preached word.

12. *Those by the way side.* The original is highly compressed, the force of the preposition and its case, demanding this idea, *those* referred to in the seed sown *along the way.* *That hear,* refers to the external organ of sense, but not to the inward perception, or the reception of the truth in the heart. The hard trodden path does not permit the seed to sink into the earth and germinate. It falls upon the way side with a rebound, and remains in open sight for the fowls of the air to devour. *The devil.* In Matthew, *the wicked one*; in Mark, *Satan.* See Ns. on Matt. 4 : 1, (end), 10. These varied forms leave the reader in no doubt, as to the agency of the arch-adversary, in obstructing the influence of truth upon the heart of man. *Lest they should believe and be saved*; the original is more marked and positive, *in order that they may not be saved, having believed,* belief in the gospel being regarded as the instrument or means of salvation. Their ultimate destruction is what Satan is aiming to effect, and the great means to this is unbelief. This is the reason why he labors so assiduously to counteract the effect of truth upon the heart. He strives first to keep it from entering the heart at all, but if, in some instances, he is unsuccessful in this, he next endeavors to secure its lodgment in such thin, shallow, unproductive soil, that the truth, having been but superficially understood, springs up with premature growth, and as speedily withers away, through lack of a deep and appreciative sense of divine things. But sometimes Satan is baffled in this

**13** They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

effort to obstruct the truth. The seed falls into deep and rich soil. He has recourse then to the thorns, thistles, weeds, which in the form of earthly cares, riches, and pleasures, he causes to spring up together with the seed, and choke its growth. Alas! what indefatigable and successful efforts, this implacable enemy of God and all good, puts forth, to turn away men created in God's image from the truth, and thus render them miserable forever. See Ns. on Matt. 13 : 18-23. *And be saved.* Salvation through grace is the result of faith in Jesus Christ. It is the great end of the preached gospel, to bring men to belief in Christ. When the gospel is rendered inefficacious through the agency of Satan, men remain in unbelief and are lost. Hence his unwearied efforts to hide the gospel from the hearts of men (2 Cor. 4 : 3, 4); or in the language of this parable, to snatch away the seed of truth, before it has time to take root, spring up, and bear the fruits of faith and holiness.

13. *They on the rock.* The construction of the original does not refer this, as in Matthew and Mark, to the reception of the seed upon the rock, but to the rock upon which these superficial hearers of the word repose, having no root in themselves, and no susceptibility of deep and lasting religious impressions. They have no depth of soil, as a basis of growth for that which is sown. Luke's form of expression strikes therefore at the very foundation and cause of the difficulty, while Matthew and Mark's, look rather to the fatal effect of this underground rock upon the seed sown. *Which for a while believe.* This does not teach that a man may have genuine, vital godliness, and then fall away and be lost. The faith referred to here, is only the semblance of that which is genuine. It is an external profession of belief in

14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and

pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and

Christ, an outward form of religion, a zeal and joy, the very violence of which shows its shallow foundation, and the certainty of its failure at the first severe trial to which it may be exposed. *Fall away*, i. e. apostatize. Compare 1 Tim. 4 : 1; Heb. 3 : 12. In Matthew and Mark, the parallel expression is *are offended*, a word in itself of less fearful import (see Matt. 26 : 31, 38; John 16 : 1; Rom. 14 : 21), but which here from its connection, has the like idea of apostasy, fully expressed by Luke.

14. *And that which fell*, &c. Here Luke adopts the form of expression employed by Matthew and Mark, referring to the seed sown, and not as in v. 13, to the persons themselves in whose hearts it was sown. *That which fell*; literally, *with respect to that which fell*. *They*, i. e. the persons represented by the seed thus falling. *Go forth*; literally, *going forth* (the participial form throwing the main emphasis on the verb *are choked*) to their varied employments. The word answers to our expressions, *in process of time*, *after a while*, &c. The words *with cares*, *riches* and *pleasures*, are taken by some with the participle *going forth*, as though they went away from the hearing of the word, under the influence of these great moving causes of action. This would give sense and significance to the passage. But I prefer the interpretation, which constructs these words with the verb *are choked*, as denoting the means by which the fruitfulness of the word is hindered. Nothing would be more natural, in such a connection, than to make special mention of the things, which choked or hindered the plants in their growth. The word *cares*, may have special reference to that class of persons, who are dependent upon their daily labor for their subsistence, and upon whom oftentimes the cares of life weigh very heavily. This

however does not prevent its application to all in every condition, who are filled with anxious care and solicitude, in regard to the things of life. It is hardly necessary to observe, that the votaries of wealth and pleasure embrace all, who are not included in the persons referred to, as oppressed with the cares and anxieties of life. Three more sweeping generic terms for worldly-mindedness, could not be found in our language. *Bring no fruit to perfection*. In Matthew and Mark: *becometh unfruitful*. The words of Luke look to the partial growth of the plant, which springing up with the promise of much fruitfulness, is soon choked by the rank surrounding weeds, dwindles away, becomes sickly, and dies without perfecting any fruit whatever.

15. This verse is introduced by the same construction, as was noted in v. 14. *In an honest and good heart*. The word *honest*, is not here to be taken in the sense we give it, when we speak of an *honest* man. The original words translated *honest and good*, are often found joined in a sort of compound expression, with scarcely any difference in sense to be sought between them. Generally the former term is used of external, the latter, of internal excellence, but here the latter sense predominates in both. Bengel, whose excessive fondness for word-criticism is apparent in his valuable annotations, says that *honest* refers here to *relative*, and *good*, to *absolute* excellence. *Keep it*, i. e. hold it fast; retain it in their mind. This is opposed to what is affirmed in v. 12, of the way side hearers, from whose heart the devil snatches the word, before it has taken root. We learn from this feature in the parable, that the word must not only be heard, but laid up in the mind, to be pondered upon in subsequent hours of reflection. *In patience*, i. e. under suffering and trial, which call into exercise

good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience.

16 'No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed; but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

17 'For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; nei-

g Mat. 5: 15; Ma. 4: 21; ch. 11: 33.

A Mat. 10: 26; ch. 12: 2.

the virtues of patience, endurance, and constancy. This is placed in contrast with the persecutions and temptations, which acted so disastrously upon the stony-ground hearers. See Matt. 13: 21; Mark 4: 17. Luke omits the ratio of increase given by Matthew and Mark.

16-18. The parallel passage is found in Mark 4: 21-25, on which see Notes. *No man, when he hath lighted, &c.* This negative is expressed in an interrogative form in Mark. *That they which enter into the house or room. May see the light.* A lighted candle is not an object to look at, but to give light by which other things may be seen. The word *light*, is not therefore here to be confounded with a lighted candle, but refers to the light which is caused by it. *Be made manifest*; better and more literal, *become manifest*. *How ye hear.* In Mark: *what ye hear*. The same general idea of care and caution, in regard to the reception of truth, lies at the basis of both directions. The word of God should be listened to with candor, attention, a prayerful spirit, and a sincere determination to abide by its demands, however contrary they may be to the natural inclination of the heart. Otherwise it is not only ineffective of good, but, in the expressive language of Paul (2 Cor. 2: 16), becomes a savor of death unto death. *That which he seemeth to have, or which he thinketh he hath.* This explains what in Mark is expressed somewhat paradoxically, "he that hath not, from him shall be taken, even that which he hath." It is not

ther *any thing* hid, that shall not be known and come abroad.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: 'for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

19 ¶ 'Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

† Mat. 13: 12; & 25: 29; ch. 19: 26.

‡ Mat. 12: 46; Ma. 8: 31.

what a man does not really possess, of which he can be deprived, but that which he seemeth to have, i. e. of which he has got a temporary or imaginary possession, like the stony-ground hearers, who at first received the word with joy, but falling away, were stripped of every semblance of a belief in Christ. See N. on Matt. 13: 12. Some refer this to temporal blessings and privileges, not included in the higher blessings and graces, of which the person is found to be wholly destitute. *Seemeth to have* is not therefore an equivalent for the simple verb *has*, but refers to those spiritual as well as temporal blessings, which men so abuse, that they are judicially deprived of them. This catastrophe may take place any time during life, or it may be deferred until the hour of probation is closed at death. But with unfailing certainty, this awful threatening will be verified in the case of every one, who abuses the mercies and privileges vouchsafed to him as the means of salvation.

19-21. THE MOTHER AND BRETHREN OF JESUS COME TO SEE HIM. *Galilee.* See Ns. on Matt. 12: 46-50; Mark 3: 31-35. Luke here goes back and narrates an incident, which occurred previous to the parable of the sower. He is, as usual in the synoptic portions of his gospel, less full in detail than either Matthew or Mark. One or two important features of the incident are given by him, which are omitted by the two other evangelists. In v. 19, we find in the great crowd that gathered around

20. And it was told him *by certain* which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

22 ¶ 'Now it came to pass on

Mat. 8 : 23; Ma. 4 : 35.

Jesus, the reason why his relatives could not come near him, a fact implied, but not asserted in the narrative of Matthew and Mark. In v. 21, the doing of the word of God is made dependent on its having been previously heard, which fact, so necessary to the vindication of God's justice, in always previously sowing where he designs to reap, is also omitted in the other gospels. It is thus that completeness is given to the varied narration, and the most convincing proof of the veracity and independence of the evangelists is furnished.

20. The construction of the original is somewhat peculiar. The literal translation is: (some persons) *saying thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to see thee, it was told him*, i. e. the report of their being present and desiring to speak with him, was passed along through the crowd, and thus communicated to him. The subject in such a construction is often omitted, when, as here, it can be readily supplied from the context. The words are so shaped, as to imply the presence of a great crowd, rendering it impossible for one on the outside to directly address Jesus.

21. *Are these.* The pronoun has a strong demonstrative force, as though he pointed with his finger to his disciples who were present. Here he reaffirms the sentiment, which he uttered to the astonishment of his parents, while sitting in the temple in the midst of the doctors, that he has higher affinities and relationships than those of an earthly nature. There was nothing, however, on either occasion, disrespectful to his earthly relations, but

a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed, he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy.

the less was lost sight of in the greater.

22-25. JESUS CROSSES THE LAKE AND STILLS THE TEMPEST. *Lake of Galilee.* See N. on Matt. 8 : 18-27; Mark 4 : 35-41. The time of this incident is left indefinite in Luke, but Mark tells us, that it was the same day, in which he pronounced the parables of the sower, the tares, the grain of mustard-seed, &c. by the lake of Galilee.

22. *They launched forth.* Before they embarked, the incident took place related in 9 : 57-62. Matthew narrates the events in their proper order.

23. *He fell asleep.* For the reason, see N. on Matt. 8 : 24. *Fell asleep.* The preposition which is united to this verb gives it the usual meaning, *awaked from sleep*. But as such cannot be its meaning here, we must attribute to the preposition an intensive force, *he fell into a sound sleep*. This shows his great physical exhaustion from the labors of the day. See N. on Matt. 8 : 24 (end). *There came down.* This wind-storm is viewed as descending from the atmospheric heavens. See N. on Matt. 6 : 9. So in 9 : 64, the disciples would call down fire from heaven, i. e. lightning from the clouds. See also Rev. 18 : 13. The position of the lake, environed by lofty hills, exposed it to sudden and violent storms. *They were filled*, i. e. the vessel, the persons sailing in it being figuratively put for the ship itself. So in Matt. 3 : 12, the threshing-floor is put for the grain thereon. Some give this as the sense, that the ship was so submerged in the waves (see Matthew and Mark), that the persons in it were drenched with

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And he said unto them,

water. This comports well with the following verb, which cannot be referred to the ship, but to the persons sailing in it, who were in jeopardy, through danger of the ship's going down.

24. *They*, i. e. his disciples. See Matt. 8:25. *Master, Master*. Ejaculatory language, which bespoke their great and imminent peril. The word here rendered *Master*, literally signifies *one set over*, as a prefect, teacher, and here recognizes on the part of the disciples, the authority of Jesus, as their guide and instructor. *Rebuked the winds and the raging* (literally, *the swelling*, referring to the great waves) *of the water*. He addressed his reproof both to the wind as the cause, and to the raging billows as the effect. Things so closely united as to seem inseparable to us, were with him so distinct that, at a word, he could have caused a suspension of either; the wind to cease, while the waves were suffered to rage on, or the wind to continue at its height, while the waters were so calmed, as not to be agitated by a single ripple. But he addressed both at the same time, and instantly the wind ceased, the waves sank down, and the whole lake became tranquil, as in the stillest summer's day. This obedience of the raging waves, as well as of the wind, was noticed by the persons on board (v. 25); and indeed it was the more strange of the two, for the wind sometimes very suddenly becomes lulled, but the swelling waves never instantly cease to roll, but subside gradually. This sublime exercise of power, is narrated in the most simple language, and reminds us of the words, so celebrated, as the highest expression of the sublime: "Let there be light, and there was light." In Mark 4:39, we have

Where is your faith? And they being afraid wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

26 "And they arrived at the  
m Mat. 8:28; Ma. 5:1.

our Lord's words, "Peace, be still," on which see Note.

25. *Where is* (i. e. has gone) *your faith!* This implies not the entire want of faith, but its weakness or temporary suspension. In Matthew it is, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* Mark adds to the former clause, *How is it that ye have no faith.* In Luke, he speaks of their faith as lost; in Matthew, as deficient; in Mark, as not existing (Webster and Wilkinson); in all which there is a remarkable harmony in sense with diversity of language. In Matthew, who in this respect is to be followed, this inquiry precedes the stilling of the tempest, which adds to the sublimity of the scene, our Lord, looking out with calm dignity upon the angry tempest, which threatened every moment to engulf the vessel, and impressing upon his disciples before he uttered his potent command to the elements a moral lesson, never to despair while he was on board. *What manner of man is this?* He must be superhuman. He can be no mere man. These words are represented here and in Mark, as spoken by the disciples, but they were doubtless caught up and repeated by all the crew. See N. on Matt. 8:27. *For he commandeth*, &c. The word *for* would better be rendered *that* or *in that*, referring to the proof of our Lord's supernatural power, in the obedience of the elements to his behest. *Commandeth*; literally, *gives orders to*, as one having authority, to his subordinates. The word is happily selected, to show the absolute control of Jesus over the elements.

26-40. THE TWO DEMONIACS OF GALILEA. *S. E. coast of the Lake of Galilee.* See Ns. on Matt. 8:28-34; 9:1, and particularly on Mark 5:1-21, whose ac-

country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the

city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs.

count is much the fullest and most graphic. Verses 3-6 in Mark, are entirely omitted in Matthew and Luke, except that the latter refers in v. 29, to the unavailing force of chains and fetters, to restrain the maniac from violence. In v. 26, Luke, by the words *over against Galilee*, fixes more definitely the general location of the country of the Gadarenes, than Matthew or Mark. In regard to the place where this miracle took place, Dr. Thomson, whose valuable book has been published since my commentary on Matthew, contends that it cannot have been Gadara, which must have been three hours' distance to the south of the extreme shore of the lake in that direction, whereas this city, as well as country, was at the shore of the lake, and the miracle took place immediately after he left the ship. He identifies the city with Gersa or Chersa, which was within a few rods of the shore, and above which rises an immense mountain, in which are ancient tombs, out of some of which, the two men possessed of devils may have issued to meet Jesus. The lake is so near the base of the mountain, that the swine, rushing madly down it, could not stop, but would be hurried on into the water and be drowned. Dr. Thomson thinks that Matthew, who was from this region, and personally knew the localities, wrote the name correctly; and that Mark and Luke being strangers to this part of the country, by mentioning the *country of the Gadarenes*, intended to point out to their distant Greek and Roman readers, the mere vicinity of the place, where the miracle was wrought, Gergesa, or Gerasa, or Chersa, however written or pronounced, being comparatively unknown, while Gadara was a Greek city, celebrated for its temples and theatres, and for the warm baths of Hieromax just below it. These are strong arguments in favor of Gerasa, as

the scene of the miracle, and offered by one, whose opportunities for arriving at the truth, have not been equalled by any geographer of Palestine. The apparent discrepancy between the mention of only one demoniac by Mark and Luke, and the two spoken of in Matthew, is removed in N. on Matt. 8: 28.

27. *Out of the city*, i. e. belonging to the city. This harmonizes the words with Matthew and Mark, *out of the tombs*, where was his temporary dwelling-place. *Long time* shows that the demoniacal possession had been a long standing one. This feature is peculiar to Luke, although implied in Matthew, and particularly in Mark, vs. 3-5. *Ware no clothes*. Another incident peculiar to Luke, but implied in Mark, v. 15, where, as an evidence of his complete cure, he is said to have been found by those who came forth from the city, "*clothed and in his right mind.*" The words of Luke are to be taken of entire nudity, the propensity, as Alford remarks, to go entirely naked being a well-known symptom in certain kinds of raving madness. Pritchard on Insanity, p. 26, (I cite from Trench,) quotes an Italian physician's description of raving madness or mania: "A striking and characteristic circumstance is the propensity to go quite naked. The patient tears his clothes to tatters, and notwithstanding his constant exertion of mind and body, the muscular strength of the patient seems daily to increase. He is able to break the strongest bonds, even chains." In like manner Thomson (Land and Book, vol. I. p. 211) says that it is one of the most common traits in this madness, that the victims refuse to wear clothes. "I have seen them," says he, "absolutely naked in the crowded streets of Beirut and Sidon. There are also cases in which they run wildly about the country and frighten the whole neighborhood." How corroborative is

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

29 For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters;

this of the fidelity to truth of the sacred narrative. On v. 28, see Ns. on the parallel passage in Matthew and Mark.

29. This verse is parenthetic, and corresponds, in reversed order of clauses, to vs. 4, 8 in Mark, on which see Notes. For the tense of the verb *had commanded*, which, according to the best MSS. should have been the imperfect, *was commanding*, see N. on Mark, v. 8. It was while our Lord was arresting the violence of the demoniac by the words, "come out of the man, thou unclean spirit," that the leading demon uttered the cry of dismay, noted in v. 28. *Oftentimes*. Alford condemns this translation, and also the one, *for many years*, adopted by some expositors, and gives as the true rendering, *during a long time*. But the corresponding passage in Mark, has a word to which can be assigned no other meaning than *often*. Reference is doubtless had in Luke, both to the length of time, during which the man had suffered from this malignant possession (see v. 27), and also, by the tense of the verb, to the frequent attacks made upon him by the demons. *Was driven of the devil*. The use of the preposition with the passive verb in the original, places beyond a doubt the personality of the agent. *Into the wilderness*, i. e. into desert places. Mark says, that he dwelt night and day (i. e. continually) in the mountains. Every attempt to confine him seems to have been abortive, and followed by a violent outburst of rage, causing him to forsake the dwelling-places of men.

and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out "into the deep.

a. Re. 20: 3.

30. *What is thy name?* Stier refers to this expression, and the words, *thou unclean spirit* (Mark 5: 8), in proof that our Lord did not possess omniscience in his humiliation, but unless in cases where the Father gave him special and instant revelation, was subjected to the successive perceptions of observation, like humanity in general. This excellent commentator also thinks that our Lord saw in the outset, only an ordinary instance of demoniacal possession, but soon discerns one of an aggravated kind, and then enters into a most marvellous and mysterious colloquy with the unclean spirit. But as I have shown in my Note on Mark 5: 9, our Lord did not propose this question, because of his own ignorance of the state of this demoniac, but in order to show to those around him, how malignant was this Satanic possession, and the mighty power demanded to effect the cure of the afflicted man. *Because many devils*, &c. These are the words of the evangelist. *For we are many*, in Mark, are the words of the demon speaking through the organs of the man.

31. *They besought him*. In Mark the singular is employed, one of the demons being represented as speaking for himself and companions, or the number being reduced to unity, in conformity with the single person, through whose organs of speech they made their request. In some of the best manuscripts and versions, the singular is employed in Luke also, which comports better with the singular in v. 30. *Into the deep*, i. e. the abyss,

32 And there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain : and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine : and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see what was done ; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind : and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw *it* told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about <sup>2</sup> besought him to depart from them ; for they were

o Mat. 8 : 34. p Ac. 16 : 39.

where evil spirits are punished. See N. on Mark 5 : 10. Compare also Rev. 9 : 1.

32. *On the mountain.* For the reconciliation of this with Mark's "nigh unto the mountain," see N. on Mark 5 : 11. *That he would suffer them*, in case he was determined to eject them from their present habitation. This condition is annexed in Matthew, and implies their strong preference to remain unmolested in their present quarters. *He suffered them.* In Matthew, the form of the permission is given in the single word *go*. In regard to the reason for this request of the demons, and its being granted by Jesus, see N. on Matt. 8 : 30, 31.

35. *Sitting at the feet of Jesus*, as a disciple ready to receive and obey his instructions. The construction of the original denotes that the man had come to Jesus to be instructed, there being an implied contrast between his previous seclusion from human society, and his now coming of his own accord to sit, as a learner, at the feet of his Deliverer. A similar *constructio pregnantis* (as it is technically called) of the preposition, is found in 10 : 39 (on which see Note), and in Acts 22 : 3. The same construction, under a different relation, is referred to in N. on Matt. 3 : 6.

37. *The whole multitude, &c.* The people thronged forth from the whole

country round about, to see the strange sight (see v. 35), and after having learned, by what was told them, as well as what they saw, of the wondrous miracle, *were seized with great fear*, and prayed him to depart out of their country. What is here denominated *the whole multitude*, is in Matthew *the whole city*, including, of course, the immediate vicinity. *Besought him, &c.* They seem to have feared some further destruction of their property, and instead of endeavoring to propitiate him, publicly and wickedly besought him to leave their country, as though a Being of such power needed to be physically present, in order to see and punish them for their sins. The verb *were taken*, has here the signification of fixed and permanent possession, and is employed in 4 : 38 ; Matt. 4 : 24 ; Acts 28 : 8, of persons afflicted with diseases. It was not a transient fear, but one deep and abiding, which had taken possession of them. It was generically like that spoken of in Heb. 10 : 27, and was to be expected from the depraved lives of this people, and the severe judgment which had befallen them, in the destruction of their property. *And he went up* ; literally, *having embarked*. Stier remarks, that it was far more fearful than listening to the request of the devils to enter the swine, the Lord's granting to the Gergesenes *their supplication*. *Returned back*



taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

38 Now 'the man, out of whom the devils were departed, besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him.

q Ma. 5: 18.

again. These words are employed by way of anticipation, as the incident in vs. 38, 39 finds its place, before our Lord went on board to recross the lake.

38, 39. Matthew has omitted this highly interesting and instructive incident. To the reasons given in my Note on Mark 5: 19, why our Lord sent the man away to proclaim what great things had been done for him, I may here add, that there did not exist in this semi-heathen country, which Jesus was about to leave, the ground of fear of political excitement, as in Galilee, where the people were ready to gather in seditious assemblages, around the standard of any leader, who would promise them deliverance from the Roman yoke.

40. *When Jesus was returned, &c.* See N. on Matt. 9: 1. *His own country*, i. e. Capernaum. See v. 22. *Gladly received*. There was no need of italicizing *gladly*, the idea being contained in the verb, which signifies to receive as a guest, to entertain, to give a welcome to. See Acts 15: 4; 18: 27; 28: 30. It is implied that they went forth to meet him, when they saw the ship approaching. *For they were waiting, &c.* This denotes the reason of the preceding act of welcome, and shows that the people had assembled in expectation of his arrival. They may have supposed his excursion into the country of the Ga-

40 ¶ And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people *gladly* received him; for they were all waiting for him.

41 ' And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue; and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.

r Mat. 9: 18; Ma. 5: 22.

darenes, a temporary one, and kept on the lookout therefore for his return. If so, when his ship was descried in the distance, word was rapidly spread, and the people hastily assembled to meet and welcome him, as here related.

41-56. THE RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER, AND HEALING OF THE WOMAN WITH THE ISSUE OF BLOOD. *Capernaum*. See Ns. on Matt. 9: 18-26; Mark 5: 22-48. There are a few slight verbal variations, in the several accounts of this miracle, but Luke adheres so closely to the narrative of the other Evangelists, that a reference to that portion of my commentary, will be nearly all that will be necessary.

42. *One only daughter*. A pleonasm not contained in the original, which signifies an *only begotten* (or *only*) daughter. This is peculiar to Luke, and shows that he drew his materials from an independent source. *About twelve years of age*. This is also confined to Luke, the only clue to her age in Mark, being the words *little daughter*, while Matthew has the still more indefinite word *daughter*. *Thronged him*. The verb literally signifies to strangle, choke, or suffocate by pressure. It is an advance on Mark's expression, which denotes only the great and dense crowd which attended him, without referring, as does Luke, to their crowding upon him, even to suffocation.

43 'And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,

44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment; and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd.

45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that 'virtue is gone out of me.

47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him

• Mat. 9: 20. ‡ Ma. 5: 30; ch. 6: 19.

43. *Had spent*; literally, *having moreover spent*. *Physicians*. The practitioners of the healing art appear to have been quite numerous in the time of Christ, and to have attained to considerable skill. See Joseph. Ant, 17, § 5.

44. *Her issue of blood stanch'd*; literally, *the flowing of her blood stood* (i. e. ceased), as though it had been suddenly congealed, so instantaneous and complete was her cure. Mark refers to it under a different metaphor, *was dried up*, which also expresses her radical and perfect cure. Such unity, under varied forms of expression, is only found in writers of the highest independence and truthfulness.

45. Here we have a sample of Peter's forwardness and impetuosity of character. There is in his reply a shade of censure, that his Master should ask who touched him, when such numbers were pressing upon him (see v. 42). Peter's name is not mentioned in the parallel passage in Mark.

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before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

49 'While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

50 But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

52 And all wept, and bewailed

• Ma. 5: 35.

46. This reply of Jesus to his disciples, is omitted in Mark. *Virtue*, i. e. the healing power. *Out of*; more literally *away from*, external rather than internal separation being denoted by the Greek preposition. The form of expression is suited to the act of external touch on the part of the woman, and from our Lord's person as thus touched, the healing power had gone forth. How greatly does this enhance his inherent miraculous power, that the mere touch of his body, should be followed by such an effluence of the healing virtue.

47, 48. *She was not hid*; better, *it was not hid from him*. This is omitted in Mark. *Declared unto him, &c.* This is an expansion of Mark's "told him all the truth." *Before all the people*, in contrast with the great pains which she had previously taken to promote the concealment of her action. Webster and Wilkinson remark, that it is not necessary to seek Christ openly, but it is required of all to acknowledge

her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, 'but sleepeth.

53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, 'arise.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

56 And her parents were astonished; but 'he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

α John 11: 11, 13. γ Ch. 7: 14; John 11: 43. s Mat. 8: 4; & 9: 30; Ma. 5: 43.

him openly, when he has been sought and found. See John 3: 2; 13: 39. *Go in peace.* See N. on Matt. 10: 13.

51-56. See Ns. on Matt. 9: 23-43; Mark 5: 38-42.

#### CHAPTER IX.

1-6. THIRD CIRCUIT IN GALILEE, AND MISSION OF THE TWELVE. *Galilee.* See Ns. on Matt. 9: 35-38; 10: 5-42; 11: 1; Mark 6: 6-13. Luke's account of the instruction and sending forth of the Twelve, is the briefest, that of Matthew, much the fullest. There is not much difference, in the order and fulness of detail, between Luke and Mark.

1. *Power and authority.* See N. on 4: 36. *Over all devils* of whatever malignancy and power. By the force of the preposition, the literal rendering should be: *to be exercised over or upon all demons.* This idea of purpose is denoted in the next clause, by the infinitive, which is to be constructed with the word *gave*, and not with *power and authority*, as some interpret.

2. This is an expansion of the latter clause of the preceding verse. Preaching the kingdom of God was the prime object of their mission. Healing of diseases and ejection of demons, were the credentials of their divinely appointed ministry. *Sent them in pairs.*

#### CHAPTER IX.

THEN 'he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

2 'And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 'And he said unto them, Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor script, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

4 'And whatsoever house ye

\* α Mat. 10: 1; Ma. 8: 18; & 6: 7. δ Mat. 10: 7, 8; Ma. 6: 12; ch. 10: 1, 9. ο Mat. 10: 9; Ma. 6: 8; ch. 10: 4; & 23: 33. d Mat. 10: 11; Ma. 6: 10.

See Mark 6: 7. *To preach*, to proclaim the truths of the gospel as public messengers or criers.

3. *Take nothing.* In Mark the indirect narrative is observed: "He commanded them that they should take nothing." *Your journey.* The pronoun is implied in the Greek article, and is therefore unnecessarily *italicized*, in our common version. For the removal of the apparent discrepancy between Luke's *neither staves*, and Mark's *save a staff only*, see N. on Matt. 10: 10.

4. *Enter into*, on your first arrival at the town or village. *There abide*, i. e. make that house your lodging-place. It is not prohibitory of their going out of the house, for the purposes of their mission, but of their shifting their quarters from one house to another, which would subject them to the imputation of being difficult to be suited, or of seeking places where they would be most sumptuously entertained. This was a command of the more importance, for on their first arrival in a place, they would not be likely to receive the hospitalities of the more affluent, until by their miracles they had attained to such public consideration, as would make them the objects of attention to the rich. They were not, therefore, to leave the humble abode

enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 'And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, *'shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.*

6 'And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

7 ¶ Now Herod the tetrarch

*e* Mat. 10: 14. *f* Ac. 13: 51.  
*g* Mat. 6: 12. *h* Mat. 14: 1; Ma. 6: 14.

first opened for their reception, to comply with any invitation proffered them by the rich and honorable, however it might be pressed upon them for acceptance. *There abide*, "till ye depart from the place." Mark.

5. *Shake off, &c.* "An emblematical action; by which the apostles were to signify, that they would regard the Jews who rejected their message, as on a level with the heathen, and would have no further intercourse with them." Webster and Wilkinson. *The very dust*. This is faithful to the intensity of the original.

6. *They departed*. See N. on Mark 6: 12. *Preaching the gospel*, expressed in the original in one word. In Mark: "preached that men should repent." The promises and blessings of the gospel are theirs only, who truly repent of their sins. Preaching the gospel embraces the preaching of repentance, and the latter belongs to the former, as the part is included in the whole. *Everywhere*, in all the towns and villages to which they came.

7-9. *HEROD'S OPINION OF JESUS. Galilee*. See N. on Matt. 14: 1-12; Mark 6: 14-29. The detail in Luke and Mark is much fuller than in Matthew. Luke calls Herod by his real title, *tetrarch*. Mark styles him *king*, which title, as being the son of Herod the Great, was sometimes through courtesy given him.

7, 8. Herod's mind was suited to alarm and superstitious fear, as it was

heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded; but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

*h* Ch. 23: 8.

only a few days previous, that he had been guilty of the murder of John the Baptist, and was no doubt given up to remorse and gloomy forebodings of impending judgment, in consequence of that unjust and cruel deed. *Was perplexed*. He knew not what to think of the wonderful things which he heard of Jesus. *Because it was said, &c.* The guilty conscience of Herod inclined him to the view of his servants, that in Jesus there was a reappearance of John (see Matt. 14: 2; Mark 6: 16), although some were of the opinion that Elias, or one of the old prophets, had appeared. It is to be noticed that the expression *was risen*, is not employed of Elias, as of John and one of the old prophets, inasmuch as he did not suffer death, but was taken bodily up to heaven (2 Kings 2: 11).

9. *John have I beheaded, &c.* This is the only reference made by Luke to the tragic end of John, which is somewhat singular, when his full detail of John's birth is taken into account. But this omission of what is so fully and circumstantially detailed by Matthew and Mark, is a convincing proof, that Luke was no copyist of their gospels. Nor was the particularity of his account of John's birth, to be attributed to any thing apart from his relation to Jesus Christ, as his Forerunner. Hence when brought forward upon the stage of action, and shown to have fulfilled his high mission, he is dropped by Luke,

10 <sup>a</sup> And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. <sup>1</sup> And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city, called Bethsaida.

*ℓ* Ma. 6: 30. *ℓ* Mat. 14: 13.

as having no longer any essential relation to the narrative, which he has taken in hand to give. *Who is this?* The different opinions expressed as to who Jesus was, may be supposed to follow this question of Herod. *Such things* refers to the *mighty works*, by which Herod, as reported in Matthew and Mark, designates our Lord's miracles. *He desired to see him*, in order that his doubts and fears might be removed. His wish was not gratified, however, until the morning of our Lord's crucifixion. See 23: 6-12.

10-17. THE TWELVE RETURN FROM THEIR MISSIONARY TOUR. JESUS RETIRES WITH THEM ACROSS THE LAKE, AND FEEDS THE FIVE THOUSAND. *Capernaum. N. E. coast of the Lake of Galilee.* See Ns. on Matt. 14: 13-21; Mark 6: 30-44; John 6: 1-14. The great miracle here recorded, is the only one which is found in all the evangelists. John relates it apparently for the purpose of introducing our Lord's subsequent discourse at Capernaum, on the true bread from heaven (see John 6: 5-65). In regard to the comparative detail, Mark is the fullest and most graphic, although John introduces the trial of Philip's faith (vs. 5-7), and Andrew's report of the presence of the lad, with five barley-loaves and two small fishes (vs. 8, 9), interesting and important incidents to the completeness of the miracle, and the absence of every means of a natural supply of food. The diversities in the several accounts are small and verbal, and the miracle is placed on the broad and immovable foundation of four independent witnesses, two of whom were present and saw the transaction.

10. *He took them*; literally, *having taken them* as his companions. *Went aside*; literally, *he withdrew*. Luke expresses only the general idea of retire-

vately into a desert place belonging to the city, called Bethsaida.

11 And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto

ment, without particularizing whether he withdrew by land or in a ship. This chasm is supplied by the other evangelists, who speak of his crossing the lake in a ship. It is strange that Alford, from this circumstance, should attribute ignorance to Luke, as to whether Jesus crossed the lake at all, on this occasion, and as a proof of this, should suppose that he refers to the Bethsaida near Capernaum, which was on the side of the lake from which our Lord crossed over. I agree with him that strong evidence is furnished here, as elsewhere, of the independence of Luke's narrative; but I cannot on so slender grounds, charge him with ignorance of our Lord's movements, or a historical mistake, however trivial it may seem to be, in regard to the point here brought forward. An omission, or a general instead of a particular statement, does not involve contradiction, or imply ignorance of the facts of the case. The evangelists, under the guidance of the Spirit, related such incidents as were deemed by them necessary to the design of their respective narratives; and it ill becomes us, from the fulness or scantiness of their detail, to sit in judgment on their comparative knowledge or ignorance. The Bethsaida here referred to, was the northern one, called *Julias*, which lay at the head of the lake, on the Jordan. Bordering upon this place was the uninhabited district, here called a *desert place belonging to the city*.

11. *When they knew it*; literally, *having known or learnt* from hearsay. See Matt. 14: 13. *He received them*; literally, *having received or welcomed them*. See N. on 8: 40. Our Lord did not send them away, although he was prevented, by their following him in such numbers, from enjoying the rest which he so much needed. This word, therefore, in its connection, im-

them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

12 " And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and

*m* Mat. 14 : 15; Ma. 6 : 35; John 6 : 1, 5.

plies the pity and compassion spoken of in the parallel passage in Matthew and Mark. It will be seen by a reference to Mark, that the multitude went Jesus and his disciples, and were standing upon the shore, as he landed from the ship. At sight of this multitude, so painstaking to attend upon his ministry, he was moved with compassion toward them (Matthew and Mark), and taught them, and healed their sick. Perhaps no incident in his whole life brings out in stronger relief, his readiness to do good, even when his exhausted frame imperatively demanded repose. *Spake*. The tense of this and the following verb refers to continued action: *he commenced and continued speaking and healing* through the day. Mark and John omit what is here said about the healing, although it may be implied in John 6 : 2.

12. *To wear away*; literally, *to decline*, as we speak of the declination of the sun, or of the other heavenly bodies, the figure being taken from their apparently sinking to rest in the western horizon. Such expressions are found in every language, ancient and modern. *The twelve*. Thus were they frequently distinguished from the other disciples, after their call to the apostleship. *Send away*; literally, *set free* or *release from*, here answering to our word, *dismiss*, as a preacher dismisses his congregation, a teacher his school, &c. *Country*, as here opposed to *towns*, signifies detached houses and country residences, where the people, such as could not find accommodation in the villages, might repair and obtain lodgings for the night. *And lodge or seek*

get victuals; for we are here in a desert place.

13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

14 For they were about five thousand men. And he said to

*lodgings*. The word literally signifies *to unloose*, as beasts of burden are loosed or liberated from their loads, when travellers halt for the night. Thus the word comes to signify *to encamp, to prepare, or obtain lodgings* for the night, in which sense it is employed here.

13. *Five loaves*. We are told in John that these were barley-loaves. This kind of bread was eaten by the poor of Palestine, as Dr. Thomson says is now the fact. *Except* (i. e. unless) *we should go, &c.* This is introduced as the only alternative, and was so far beyond their ability to execute, that its mention must be regarded as apologetic for not obeying their Master's command, to give the people to eat from their stores. This appears more clear from the heightening circumstance, which is added in the words, *for all this people*. Webster and Wilkinson suggest that this may be a *deliberative* clause, that is, if I understand them, an indirect inquiry, as to whether the wants of the multitude may not be met, in the way here suggested. But this does not comport with the question proposed by them in Mark 6 : 37, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat," which is intended as an indirect denial of their ability to supply so great a multitude, by the purchase of provisions from the neighboring towns.

14. *Five thousand men*, beside women and children (Matthew). There must have been in the whole number not far from 10,000 persons. *Make them sit down*. In Matthew and Mark, he com-

his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

mands the multitude to sit down. There is no disagreement between them and Luke and John. What a man does by the agency of another, he is considered as doing himself. *By fifties.* A convenient number for the purposes of order and compactness, and not adopted, as some think, because there were *five* loaves.

18-21. PETER'S PROFESSION OF FAITH IN CHRIST. *Region of Cesarea Philippi.* See Ns. on Matt. 16: 13-20; Mark 8: 27-30. Luke here passes over a large number of events, related by the other evangelists. Among these are the walking of Jesus upon the water (Matt. 14: 21-36; Mark 6: 45-56; John 6: 15-21); his discourse to the multitude in the synagogue at Capernaum (John 6: 22-71); his justification of his disciples, who were charged with eating with unclean hands (Matt. 15: 1-20; Mark 7: 1-23); the healing of the Syrophenician woman (Matt. 15: 21-28; Mark 7: 24-30); the healing of the deaf and dumb man and feeding of four thousand (Matt. 15: 29-38; Mark 7: 31-37; 8: 1-9); his reply to the Pharisees and Sadducees who required a sign (Matt. 15: 39; 16: 1-4; Mark 8: 10-12); his caution to the disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees (Matt. 16: 4-12; Mark 8: 13-21); and healing of the blind man at Bethsaida (Mark 8: 22-26). Here Luke takes up the narrative, at the point where Jesus proposes the question, as to who men thought he was. In this passage, Luke has one additional fact of great interest, that it was when Jesus was praying alone with his disciples, that he proposed this question. Some of the most

17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

18 ¶ And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him; and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

• Mat. 16: 13; Ma. 8: 27.

glorious acts and manifestations of our Lord, were made in connection with a season of prayer. Together with the revelation which he here made of himself to the disciples, as a suffering, dying, and rising Messiah, we might include in these seasons of prayer, the descent of the Spirit at his baptism, the ordaining the Twelve, and the Transfiguration. See N. on 3: 21.

18. *Alone.* The word in the original is *by himself* or *apart* from others, and has undoubted reference to absolute privacy or retirement. The words, *his disciples were with him*, may be taken therefore in the general sense, *were in his company*, not implying that they were associated with him in the act of prayer. A similar instance occurred in the garden, where his disciples were with him, and yet he was by himself in the hour of agonizing prayer. I am inclined, however, not to press upon the word rendered *alone*, so restricted a sense, but to take it as opposed to the presence of the people who usually thronged around him, and compelled him to employ the hour of night, in order to secure a season of uninterrupted devotion. *Alone with his disciples*, seems on the whole to meet the demands of the context, which represents the question as proposed at the time of this private devotion, and also the parallel passage in Mark (3: 27), who says that he put the question to them by the way, which seems to indicate that it was while he was resting a few moments in his journey, that he engaged with his disciples in prayer and religious conversation.

19 They answering said, 'John the Baptist; but some say, Elias: and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

21 'And he straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing;

22 Saying, 'The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief

priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

23 'And he said to *them* all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25 'For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

*o* Mat. 14: 2; vs. 7, 8.  
*p* Mat. 16: 16; John 6: 69. *q* Mat. 16: 20.  
*r* Mat. 16: 21; & 17: 22.

*s* Mat. 10: 38; & 16: 24; Ma. 8: 34; ch. 14: 37.  
*t* Mat. 16: 26; Ma. 8: 36.

20, 21. *The Christ of God.* Some make the words, of *God*, equivalent to *the Son of God*; others interpret the whole expression, as *the Messiah sent of God*. Matthew has it, "the Christ, the Son of the living God." Mark: "the Christ." All are varied forms of expression for the Messiah. *That thing*, viz., that he was the *Christ of God*. See N. on Matt. 16: 20.

22-27. JESUS FORETELLS HIS OWN DEATH AND RESURRECTION. *Region of Cesarea Philippi.* See Ns. on Matt. 16: 21-28; Mark 8: 31-38. Luke connects this prophetic declaration of our Lord's death, and the trials of his followers, with the preceding conversation. This is not contradicted by any thing in Matthew or Mark. Nothing more is asserted there, than that from this time onward (such is the force of the original in Matthew), Jesus began to disclose more fully the scenes of suffering and death through which he was to pass. His disciples were now in a measure prepared to receive the great and mysterious truth, that he was to suffer and die for the sin of the world. Henceforth we shall see that his instructions relate more particularly and exclusively to this point. His disciples from this time regard him with more awe and veneration, as one whose mission was far above what they had fig-

ured to themselves would be that of the Messiah.

23. These words follow our Lord's rebuke of Peter (see Matt. 16: 22; Mark 8: 32, 33). In Mark we are informed that our Lord addressed these words to the people, as well as to his disciples. This shows that he had reached some town or village in this northern extremity of the land, and according to his custom was teaching the multitudes who came to him. *Take up his cross daily.* The word *daily* is peculiar to Luke, and has not only the sense *day by day*, but through the entire day. It is a word, therefore, of great significance, and denotes that the act of self-denial is not one to be performed at stated seasons, but continually through life.

25. *Advantaged* should have been translated *profited*, to conform with Matthew and Mark, the word in the original being the same in the three evangelists. *If he gain*; literally, *having gained*. The parallel passage in Matthew and Mark, shows, however, that the hypothetical form, in which the participle is translated in our common version, is the true rendering, unless some should prefer the stronger and more literal form, *by having gained*, making the participial clause an instrumental one. There is no essential difference in the



26 "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

27 "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here,

u Mat. 10: 33; Ma. 8: 38; 2 Ti. 2: 12.

o Mat. 16: 28; Ma. 9: 1.

two modes of translation, both assuming that the whole world is gained, and the soul lost, and in view of such a fearful result, proposing the question, 'What is a man profited, by such a trifling gain, when contrasted with so tremendous a loss.' *Lose himself*, i. e. "his life in the highest sense." Alford. The equivalent expression in Matthew and Mark, is *his soul*, which is his higher and imperishable nature. *Or be cast away*; literally, *or bring loss upon himself*, i. e. by a sort of climax, *if he shall* (in the least) *infect damage upon himself* (i. e. upon his soul).

26. *When he shall come, &c.* Meyer remarks: the Glory is threefold: (1) *His own*, which he has to and for himself, as the exalted Messiah: (2) *the Glory of God*, which accompanies him as coming down from God's throne: (3) *the glory of the angels*, who surround him with their brightness. See Alford's Note on this verse. *His own glory* (found only in Luke), is put by way of contrast with his earthly humiliation, which is implied in the words, "whosoever shall be ashamed of me." The words, *shall the Son of man be ashamed*, are not to be taken of a literal feeling of shame, as in the preceding clause, but of rejection and banishment from our Lord's presence, at the day of judgment.

28-36. THE TRANSFIGURATION. *Region of Cesarea Philippi*. See Ns. on Matt. 17: 1-13; Mark 9: 2-13. The account of this event is somewhat fuller in Luke than the other evangelists, vs. 31, 32 being found only in his narrative.

28. *About an eight days*. On this variation from the phraseology in Mat-

which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

28 ¶ And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was al-

y Mat. 17: 1; Ma. 9: 2.

thew and Mark, see N. on Matt. 17: 1. *These sayings*, i. e. the preceding discourse. *Into a mountain*; literally, *the mountain*, referring doubtless to some well-known mountain in that vicinity, to which he used to resort for purposes of devotion. To the reasons given in N. on Matthew 18: 1, why this could not have been Mount Tabor, we may add that, in the time of Christ, the summit of this mountain was fortified and inhabited. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. II. p. 139) says: "If I hesitate to admit the claims of Tabor to the honor of the Transfiguration, it is not from anything in the mount itself. No more noble or appropriate theatre for such a glorious manifestation, could be found or desired. Nor does the fact, that there may have been a village on the top at that time, present any difficulty. There are many secluded and densely wooded terraces, on the north and northeast sides, admirably adapted to the scenes of the Transfiguration." This admirable sacred geographer is therefore in doubt as to this point; but for reasons given in my Note on Matthew, I can have little hesitancy in referring the scene of the Transfiguration to some other mountain than Tabor. *To pray*. The design of our Lord in ascending this mountain, is given only in Luke. See N. on 3: 21; also on v. 18.

29. *As he prayed, &c.* See N. on 9: 18. Our Lord was enjoying a season of social devotion, with these his most beloved disciples, when he was transfigured, as here related. It would be presumption in us to affirm, that he had any premonition of the glory which

tered, and his raiment *was white and glistering*.

30 And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias

31 Who appeared in glory, and

awaited him; but the circumstances seem to show quite conclusively, that he had, and that he designedly took the three disciples, as being a number competent in the Jewish estimation, to attest the truth of this wonderful scene. *The fashion of his countenance was altered* (literally, *was another*), i. e. his appearance was changed, but his bodily form remained the same. This was necessary, or the witnesses could not have identified Jesus. *White and glistering*. The conjunction is not found in the original, and the words are highly intensive: *lightning white*; or more literally, *whitely glittering*, like the *flashing forth of lightning*. A reference to this expression of Luke, will be found in N. on Matt. 17 : 2, to which in regard to the explanation of this whole passage, as related by the three evangelists, the reader is referred.

30. *Two men*. This is peculiar to Luke, but is noticed in my comment on Matt. 17 : 3. *Who were*; literally, *the ones who were*, the pronoun being slightly emphatic, and challenging dispute as to the identity of the men spoken of. *Moses and Elias*. In Matthew, the same words are found, and in the same order. In Mark: *Elias with Moses*. This form of expression does not give precedence to Elias, but rather the reverse, he being regarded as accompanying Moses as an attendant. I think, however, that the form of expression in Matthew and Luke, as well as the order in which their names are mentioned in the reference to them which follows (Matt. v. 4; Mark v. 5; Luke v. 33), shows that no precedence is intended to be given to either, but only the order of time in which they lived on earth.

31. *Who appeared in glory*, i. e. in their glorified state. See N. on Matt. 17 : 3.

spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 But Peter and they that were with him 'were heavy with sleep: and when they were

s Da. 8 : 18; & 10 : 9.

32. *His decease*; literally, *exodus, going out or forth*, here used figuratively of his *departure from life*. The verb rendered *should accomplish*, literally signifies *fulfill, complete* in accordance with the divine appointment. Some are inclined to take the word *exodus*, of his whole earthly mission, which would be fully completed or brought to an end at Jerusalem. But this does not meet the demands of the passage, nor furnish a theme, if we may venture on such a remark, worthy of this high conversation. It most undoubtedly refers to the death which he was shortly to die, and which, in the prophetic language of these heavenly visitants, he was to accomplish or pass through, at the appointed time in Jerusalem.

32. *Were heavy* (literally, *had been heavy*) *with sleep*, i. e. they had fallen into a deep sleep. This incident, omitted in Matthew and Mark, accounts for the fact, that there was no ill-timed interruption of the heavenly converse, by the disciples, until at or near its close. *When they were awake*. Alford disapproves of this translation, and would render: *having kept awake* through the whole scene. In that case, the preceding words must be taken in the sense, that although the disciples were in a state of extreme drowsiness, through want of sleep, yet they did not yield to its influence, but remained in a state of wakefulness. But this interpretation is by no means void of difficulties, one of which is, that the words *were heavy with sleep*, are employed in Matt. 26 : 43; Mark 14 : 12, where no one would venture to give the signification of mere drowsiness. The words *when they were awakened*, may be taken in the sense of *when they were fully awake*. The view which this gives is natural and impressive. The disciples were overcome with long-continued watching

awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here : and let us make three tabernacles ; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias : not knowing what he said.

and fatigue, and sank into deep slumber. Meanwhile Jesus was holding converse with his celestial visitants, on themes of deep and absorbing interest, until, as the hours of the night wore away, the disciples awoke of their own accord, or more probably were aroused by the flashing upon them of the glorious light which emanated from Jesus ; for the bright cloud, the Shechinah of God's presence, had not yet overshadowed them, as appears from v. 34. *His glory*, which was so great, that the glory of the two men (v. 31) is not here mentioned, as being noticed by the disciples. At the same time, we are distinctly told, that they saw two men standing with him. This attestation was necessary to the validity of the record. This verse in Luke is parallel with Matt. 17 : 4, and Mark 9 : 4, where the time of the appearance of Jesus in glory, and the two men with him, is left indefinite, but in Luke is placed after their awaking from sleep. As only such comments are here made, as are on points in the sacred narrative peculiar to Luke, the reader is referred, for a more general exposition, to my Notes on Matthew and Mark.

33. *As they departed* ; more literally, *as they were departing*, or *about to depart*, for it seems to have been the intention of Peter, to prolong the interview. *Said unto Jesus*. It is evident from Matt. 17 : 7, that the disciples were at some little distance from Jesus, when Peter thus addressed him, which Webster and Wilkinson think may account for his words, fearing that a permanent separation was about to take place. *Not knowing what he said*, through fear

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them : and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son : "hear him.

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone.

a Mat. 8 : 17. b Ac. 8 : 22.

and astonishment. Olshausen, however, refers this to the absence of that fear on the part of Peter, when he first beheld the wonderful scene, which in other cases of the sacred record, was awakened by the phenomena of the spiritual world. At first he was in such a transport of ecstasy, that hardly knowing what he said, he cried out, "Master, it is good," &c. Afterwards, however, when the cloud of glory surrounded Jesus, and the awful voice of God issued from its bosom, he and his fellow-disciples sank down upon the earth (Matthew), and swooned away in terror. This, like all of Olshausen's suggestions, is worthy of consideration, but seems to be confuted by Mark 9 : 6, where the fear of the disciples is given as the reason why Peter uttered words without considering their import.

34. *They feared*, refers to the disciples, and *they entered*, to Jesus and his heavenly visitants. This is evident from the following words, *there came a voice out of the cloud*, i. e. it was heard by Peter and his fellow-disciples, as it issued from the cloud. This form of expression shows clearly, that the disciples were not enveloped in the cloud. It is strange that this should have been overlooked by many expositors, and that the entering into the cloud should have been by them referred to the disciples, who were only spectators of the scene, and at some distance from it.

36. *When the voice was past*, i. e. as soon as the words were uttered. *Was found*, i. e. was perceived to be. See 17 : 18 ; Matt. 1 : 18. *They kept it close*, &c. This they were strictly enjoined to do by Jesus, for reasons referred to

\* And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

37 'And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

c Mat. 17: 9.

d Mat. 17: 14; Ma. 9: 14, 17.

in my Note on Matt. 17: 9. *Told no man.* The negative in the original is highly intensive; literally, *they told no one in any respect*, which, with the words, *kept it close* (literally, *were silent*), makes the whole expression very emphatic. There were weighty reasons for this, in his desire to avoid every thing which would tend to exasperate his enemies, or give his followers mistaken views of his true character and mission. After the scenes of Gethsemane, of Pilate's judgment-seat, and of Calvary, by which was illustrated his predicted character, as "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," it would do to divulge the glorious scene on the mount of Transfiguration, as anticipatory of his mediatorial reign and triumphal victory over all his enemies. This direction of our Lord unfolds, in some degree, the object or design of the Transfiguration. That it was to confirm the faith of his disciples, first the chosen three, and then, when rehearsed by them after his resurrection, the whole body of believers, there can be hardly a doubt. At the same time this does not forbid our explaining it, with Stier, of a new anointing for the knowing and doing his work, which was here given from above, especially to the Son himself. *In those days*, i. e. during the time that Jesus was with them. The prohibition to secrecy extended only to the time when he should have risen from the dead. See Matt. 17: 9; Mark 9: 9.

37-43. THE HEALING OF THE DEMONIAK WHOM THE DISCIPLES COULD NOT HEAL. *Region of Cesarea Philippi.* See Ns. on Matt. 17: 14-21; Mark 9: 14-29. The account given by Mark is the most

38 And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son; for he is mine only child.

39 And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him, hardly departeth from him.

copious, and, to the comments on that Evangelist, the reader is referred. The words, *on the next day*, fix definitely the time of this incident. They had spent, at least, one whole night upon the mountain, in the closing hours of which the Transfiguration took place. On the next morning, they set out on their return to the multitude. It lies on the face of this whole passage, that the mountain was some distance from the place where he had left the nine disciples, yet not so far as Mount Tabor, which lay some forty miles to the south of the region of Cesarea Philippi, where they then were.

37, 38. *Much people* (literally, *a great throng of people*) met him. See N. on Mark 9: 15. *And behold, &c.* Mark relates this more fully, and makes the words of the father a reply to our Lord's question to the scribes, in regard to the subject of their dispute with his disciples. *For he is mine only child.* This is found only in Luke. It enhanced the agony of the father, that his only child was the subject of such a malignant possession.

39. *A spirit taketh him, &c.* In the original, the three following verbs have no subject expressed, and, therefore, would grammatically refer to *spirit*. Yet, in sense, we must shift (as is done in our English translation) the subject of the verbs *crieth out* and *foameth*, to the child. A similar change of subject is found in 17: 2; 19: 4. *Bruising him.* I agree with Alford, that this is to be taken in a literal sense, of the efforts made by the demon to injure, if not destroy the child. The verb has the sense of *wearing him out*, which Webster and Wilkinson refer to the effect of the whole

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.

41 And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and

tare him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

43. And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

paroxysm. But see Mark 9 : 20. Dr. Thomson says, that in Sidon there are cases of epileptic fits, which, in external manifestations, closely resemble the one here mentioned, and that these fits seized a young man in his own house repeatedly. *Hardly*; literally, *with labor, trouble*. The word expresses the reluctance of the spirit to leave the child.

41, 42. *With you*. In the original, the preposition is expressive of the closest proximity, as in John 1 : 1. Christ shows by this, his intimate condescension and nearness to all who apply to him for relief. When the father was yielding to discouragement, at the ill success of the disciples, in their attempts to eject the demon, the Saviour was approaching in the distance, and was soon near at hand, and ready to grant succor to the afflicted demoniac. *Delivered him again*, &c. "This implies the idea of restoration to his family, from his former alienated and lost state." Webster and Wilkinson.

43-45. JESUS AGAIN FORETELLS HIS OWN DEATH AND RESURRECTION. *Galilee*. See Ns. on Matt. 17 : 22, 23; Mark 9 : 30-32. Luke apparently connects this conversation with the incident just detailed. But it will be seen, on close re-examination, that the expression of time is quite indefinite, the conversation taking place while his disciples were thrown into a state of wonder, at the sayings and doings of their Lord. Mark is more definite, and represents the incident as taking place while they were on their way from Cesarea Philippi to Capernaum. See N. on Matt. 17 : 22.

43. *Were amazed*. See N. on Matt. 19 : 25. Bengel says that this word is

employed here of the state of their mind, and *wondered*, in the next clause, of what was expressed in their conversation. *Mighty power of God* (*majesty, greatness*. Webster and Wilkinson), as displayed in the cure of the demoniac. *While they wondered every one*; literally, *but while all were wondering*. This is spoken of the multitude, as the disciples are particularly referred to, in the next clause. *He said unto his disciples*, as they were passing along the way from Cesarea Philippi to Capernaum. We are under no necessity of supposing that the people, referred to in the preceding clause, as being amazed at the mighty power of God, were with Jesus at this time. It is descriptive of the sentiment which pervaded the whole community, in view of the mighty works of Jesus. The contrast, however, between the wonder which his public ministry had excited, and the prediction which he uttered of his own speedy death, is very pointed and impressive. The disciples may have been unduly elated at the public manifestation of wonder at his power, and have thought that the time was near at hand, for his openly proclaiming his Messiahship. The words rendered in v. 27, may have been so interpreted by them, as to warrant the expectation, that some more glorious manifestation was near at hand. Peter, and James, and John, although debarred from sharing at present with their fellow-disciples the wondrous glory with which they had so recently seen their Master invested, were filled with the most joyful anticipations, that soon he would resume this glorious appearance, never again to lay it aside. In this

44 'Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

45 'But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from

• Mat. 17: 23. / Ma. 9: 33; ch. 2: 50; & 18: 34.

state of excitement, they had so forgotten his first declaration of his sufferings and death, that he deemed it necessary again to foretell this event, which he does in the most impressive manner, bidding them to let it *sink down in their ears*, that is, to give it a permanent lodgment in their minds.

44. *These sayings.* As our Lord had only once before this, referred in such plain terms to his death and resurrection, some, with Meyer, would refer *these words or sayings* to the foregoing miracles and discourses. But Alford well remarks that this would give no sense, for the disciples were thinking exclusively of those already. Others refer it to what he was about to say, making the expression equivalent to "this saying" in v. 45. But while it is true, that our Lord had only once before openly mentioned his sufferings and death, yet I cannot but think that there is a general reference here to what he then said, and what he was now about to say, or might say hereafter on this same subject. Such is Alford's view: "These intimations, which I make to you from time to time respecting my sufferings and death." *Into your ears.* They could only hear and remember them. The time had not yet come for the understanding of their full import. *Shall be delivered.* Our Lord's resurrection is here omitted, but is expressly stated in the conversation, as related by Matthew and Mark. *Into the hands of men.* See N. on Matt. 17: 22.

45. *They understood not this saying.* While they did not presume to doubt the truth here so solemnly affirmed by our Lord, they probably sought for it some mystic significance, which would harmonize with the notion of a reigning, victorious Messiah, adopted by the whole Jewish nation, and of which their

them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

46 ¶ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

g Mat. 18: 1; Ma. 9: 34.

minds, with all the instruction they had received from their Master in reference thereto, had not been fully dispossessed. This explains what is meant, in the next clause, by the words, it *was hid from them*, no reference being had, as Alford erroneously supposes, to the divine plan or purpose, that they should not understand the full significancy of these words. *That* is equivalent to *so that*, or *insomuch that* (as Webster and Wilkinson translate), and not, as Alford asserts, on his theory that this Greek particle must always have a *telic* sense, in order that *they might not*, &c. If it was the divine intention that they should not understand his words, why did he speak to them at all on this subject? Is it not rather to be inferred, that he taught them this truth henceforward, on different occasions, to gradually disabuse their minds of the erroneous views which they entertained respecting his mission, and accustom them to the true and scriptural idea of a suffering, dying, and finally victorious Messiah? They were slow to understand and admit this unwelcome truth, so far as it referred to the sufferings of their beloved Master; but this is quite different from referring their want of a full comprehension of it, to the purpose of God, that they should hear but not understand. *And they feared*, &c. See N. on Matt. 17: 23 (end).

46-50. AMBITIOUS CONTENTION OF THE DISCIPLES, AND THE EXHORTATION OF JESUS TO BROTHERLY LOVE. *Capernaum.* See Ns. on Matt. 18: 1-35; Mark 9: 33-50. Luke's account is least full of the three, but contains one or two important circumstances, which throw light upon the narrations of the other evangelists.

46. This verse is necessary to the right understanding of Mark, where

47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,

48 And said unto them, <sup>a</sup> Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me: 'for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

<sup>a</sup> Mat. 10: 40; & 18: 5; Ma. 9: 37; John 12: 44; & 18: 20. <sup>†</sup> Mat. 23: 11, 12.

Jesus is said to have inquired about what they were disputing by the way. In view of the context, and of the corresponding passage in Matthew and Mark, the word *reasoning*, must be taken here in the sense of a *sharp discussion, a dispute*. The word is that from which the verb rendered *disputed* in Mark 9: 34, is derived, and thus the two accounts almost verbally harmonize.

47. *Thought of their heart*. The same word as the one in v. 46, rendered *reasoning*, in our common version. The subject was not one merely of a wordy discussion, carried on through love of dispute, but which was pondered upon by each one in his own mind. It had been the subject of thought, long before it was broached in common conversation. This shows how tenacious were their views of the temporal nature of the Messiah's kingdom. One of their number was to be the prime minister, and honored counsellor of the Messianic court. Who was it to be? In the spirit of self-love, not yet fully eradicated from their heart, they prefer their respective claims, or those of their particular friends, for this high honor, and wax so warm, that the discussion becomes well nigh an angry dispute. It was this which sealed up their mouth in shame, when Jesus afterward (Mark 9: 38) asked them about the subject of their dispute. *Took a child*; literally, *having laid hold of a child*. This comports with Mark, who says that this incident occurred in the house. The discussion had taken place, as they were

49 <sup>a</sup> And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for 'he that is not against us is for us.

51 And it came to pass, when the time was come that <sup>a</sup> he should

<sup>a</sup> Ma. 9: 38; see Nu. 11: 28. <sup>†</sup> See Mat. 19: 30; ch. 11: 28. <sup>m</sup> Ma. 16: 19; Ac. 1: 2.

passing along the way. Our Lord was doubtless a little in advance, for the sake of uninterrupted reflection and meditation; or one or two of his disciples might have walked in his immediate company, while the body of them were behind. *By him*, i. e. by the side of Jesus.

48-50. *In my name*. The force of the original preposition makes the name of Jesus, the ground or basis of the act. The words may be paraphrased: *resting upon my name* (i. e. the profession of my name), as the principle of action; or more briefly, acting from Christian principle. To this the remark of John which follows (v. 49), has reference, his conscience being probably disturbed by the reflection, that he had acted somewhat hastily, in forbidding this man to act in the name of Jesus. Assuming that the Messiah's kingdom was to be essentially like human governments, and that they were to form the regal court, they naturally thought, that they were to be the sole medium of the Messianic blessings to the people at large, and that no one had a right to usurp their prerogatives. See N. on Mark 9: 38. *Is for us*. Mark: *is on our side*, i. e. is our friend and co-worker.

51-56. JESUS TAKES HIS FINAL DEPARTURE FROM GALILEE. INCIDENTS IN SAMARIA. We now enter upon a portion of our Lord's history, which is almost entirely peculiar to Luke, and which took place during his last journey to Jerusalem. Greswell inserts, between vs. 50 and 58, our Lord's visit to

be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52 And sent messengers before

his face : and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

Jerusalem, at the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7 : 2 ; 11 : 54). On this theory, he sets out as related in v. 51, from Ephraim (John 11 : 54). But it is better to refer this journey to that spoken of by Matthew, 19 : 1 ; Mark 10 : 1. It was not a direct or continuous one to Jerusalem, but very circuitous, and embraced the interval of time, from the Feast of Tabernacles in October (to which he went up privately, John 7 : 10), to just before the next passover, at which time he made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

51. *When the time was come ; literally, when the days were being fulfilled*, i. e. when the time was drawing near. Our English translation gives the idea, that the time of his ascension had fully come, whereas it wanted nearly or quite six months to the time of his crucifixion. The last stage of his earthly ministry was now about to be entered upon, and the theatre of action was to be shifted from Galilee to Judea and Perea. *That he should be received up ; literally, of his taking up* (into heaven), the construction depending upon the word *time* (literally, *days*). This peculiarity of the original is not without its meaning. It is not *his being taken up*, as though by a power not his own, but it has a reflex sense, *his taking* (himself) *up*, i. e. his ascension by his own divine power. Some erroneously refer this to his elevation on the cross, and others, to his removal by death. But it was not this upon which his eye was directed, when he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, but upon the joy that was set before him (Heb. 12 : 2), and which awaited his ascension to the Mediatorial throne in heaven. Suffering and death lay in his pathway to this glorious consummation, but not as the ultimate object, but only as a means to the end. In the expression, *his being taken up*, we may include our Lord's previous sufferings and death. So Galach : "In this expression, death, resur-

rection, and ascension are included all in one." *He steadfastly set his face to go*, i. e. it was his firm purpose to go ; the figure being taken from one who, in the eager pursuit of an object, fixes his gaze intently upon it. Compare Isa. 50 : 7. It is implied here, that our Lord knew his passion to be near at hand, and that, with a holy determination, he faltered not from his purpose to go to Jerusalem, and there suffer whatever his enemies were pleased to inflict. "Christ goes forward to this *exodus*, not so much externally by the shortest road, as internally, firmly resolved to meet it." Stier. Bengel refers to this, as the fruit of the scene on the Mount of Transfiguration.

52. *Sent messengers, &c.* The large number of persons forming our Lord's retinue, rendered it necessary to make some provision beforehand for his lodgment in the towns and villages, through which they were to pass. Bengel conjectures that it was not our Lord's habit, to find or seek for entertainment in the publicans. It has been supposed, but on no other ground than mere conjecture, that these messengers were James and John. *Before his face*, i. e. in advance of his journey. *They went*, as they had been directed. *Samaritans*. See N. on Mark 10 : 5. *To make ready for him*, shows the purpose of their being sent on in advance. The original marks the intention, leaving the effect to be determined elsewhere in the narration. Our English infinitive is less definite. Alford thinks that there is a solemnity about the sentence, which implies something more than the provision for food and lodging, namely, the announcement of his coming as Messiah, which he did not conceal in Samaria, as in Judea and Galilee. See John 4 : 26. But this is forced, and does not comport with v. 56, where their going to another village seems evidently to imply, that the rites of hospitality had been refused them in the one to which they first came. See



53 And "they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we

α John 4 : 4, 9.

also Phil. v. 22, where the noun signifying *hospitality*, or a *lodging*, is found with this verb.

53. *They* (i. e. the Samaritans) *did not receive him*, i. e., would furnish no lodging or food for him and his company. The reason is given in the next clause, which is literally, *because his face was* (that of one) *going to Jerusalem*, i. e. because he was on his way to Jerusalem, or his journey was in that direction. On occasion of the public feasts at Jerusalem, the ill feeling of the Samaritans towards any one who was a Jew, and on his way thither, was more rank and active, because it was with them a cardinal point, that Samaria was the place of divine worship. See Joseph. Antiq. xx. 6 § 1.

54. It has been a matter of wonder with some, that a person of so mild and sweet a disposition as John, could have made such a proposition as the one recorded here. But they mistake the temperament of John, as well as overlook the peculiar circumstances of the rejection of Jesus by these Samaritans. Not to insist on the ardent and impetuous disposition of these brethren, and their unbending resolution and energy of character, implied in the surname Boanerges, *sons of thunder*, no one can read the epistles of John, without having the conviction forced upon him, that their author was a prompt, decided, outspoken man, who would sacrifice himself and others, rather than that his Master should receive insult or harm. "It is quite likely, that they saw some insult of manner, or natural refusal to allow the Lord to enter their village." Alford. However this may have been, their fiery zeal was aroused at the inhospitality of the inhabitants of this village, to one for whom they felt so

command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

ο 2 Kl. 1 : 10, 12.

much love and veneration. *Wilt thou*, &c. This question is what grammarians call one of *deliberation*, that is, it suggests, as worthy of consideration and adoption, the thing proposed. There is, therefore, an implied request, that Jesus would commission them to be ministers of vengeance on these offenders. Olshausen thinks that they noticed a shade of displeasure in the look of Jesus, as they uttered these words, and, therefore, justified their proposition, by an example from the Old Testament (1 Kings 18 : 38). I would rather take the example cited, as the moving, or at least suggestive cause of their question. They were highly exasperated at the churlishness of these Samaritans. The thought occurred to them that, if the affront put upon Elijah by involuntary agents, who acted in obedience to their king, was visited by so speedy and terrific a punishment, how much more worthy of such a doom were these men who, of their own accord, had rejected One, to whom, on the Mount of Transfiguration, they had seen Elijah himself do homage. The example was not an afterthought, but one unquestionably in their mind, before they made the request. The words *fire from heaven*, refer to *lightning*, which comes from the clouds in the atmospheric heavens. See N. on Matt. 6 : 9. See also 2 Kings 1 : 12; Job. 1 : 16. *Even as*; more literally, *as also*.

55. *He turned*. The act presupposes him to have been a little in advance of his disciples. *Ye know not*, &c. How astounded must they have been at such an unexpected rebuke. They thought themselves, at least, to have been in the direct line of duty, and, probably, as doing something quite meritorious in the expression of their zeal for the

56 For <sup>r</sup> the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

57 <sup>r</sup> And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

*p* John 8 : 17; & 19 : 47. *q* Mat. 8 : 19.

honor of their Master. But, instead of receiving commendation, they are charged with absolute ignorance of the ruling disposition or temper of their minds. *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of* (i. e. ye possess). Your zeal is misguided, not being tempered with love and forbearance. You are very far from possessing the true spirit of my gospel. You need more self-knowledge, more humility, more contrition in view of your own sins, more sympathy in the lost condition of men. Such I conceive to be the spirit of our Lord's reply. Alford gives it one of two meanings, for both of which he finds justifying reasons, yet not so potent as to enable him to decide which to adopt. (1) You think you have the spirit which Elias formerly had, but in this you are mistaken; (2) Know ye not what manner of spirit you belong to (the spirit meant being the Holy Ghost)? You belong to a different kind of spirit than to the fiery judicial spirit of Elijah—a spirit of love and forgiveness. Both these senses, the latter of which is adopted by Stier, are good, but I prefer the more usual and natural one first given.

56. *For the Son of man, &c.* This explains and confirms the preceding sentiment. In imitating the example of Elijah, they thought themselves to be actuated by the spirit which possessed Jesus. But he disabuses them of this mistake. His mission was not to destroy, but to save. He came into the world on an errand of mercy, and not of judgment. John 3 : 17; 5 : 45. How inappropriate then for his followers to seek to destroy those whom it

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

59 <sup>r</sup> And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

*r* Mat. 8 : 21.

was the mission of their Master to save. No argument is to be drawn from this passage, condemnatory of the conduct of Elijah in calling fire from heaven. His office was that of a stern judge and reformer. He was the vicegerent of an avenging Deity, to execute judgment upon the worship of Baal, which had almost wholly superseded that of Jehovah. This passage is confidently pronounced spurious by Olshausen; but Stier well remarks, that if it be a gloss, it is assuredly one which flows very naturally from the spirit of Christ, and is as perfectly in its place, as if the Lord had really spoken it on this occasion. Most of the best commentators are united in pronouncing it genuine. *And they went, &c.* This accords with the direction given to his apostles and disciples (Matt. 10 : 14, 23.)

57–62. The incidents here related, are much out of their natural order and connection. They evidently belong to the time, when he was about to cross the Lake of Galilee, and find their parallel account in Matt. 8 : 19–22, on which see Notes. Luke's narrative is the more copious, vs. 61, 62 being peculiar to him. These previous incidents in the history of Jesus, were doubtless suggested to Luke, by the rejection of Jesus by the Samaritans.

57. *As they went in the way to the ship, in which they were about to cross the lake* (8 : 22). *A certain man. In Matthew, a scribe.*

59. *He said unto another.* Here we have the command. In Matthew we have simply the answer of the man, which implied however the previous direction of our Lord. *Suffer me first, &c.* "Perhaps the disciple desired to

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

61 And another also said, Lord, 'I will follow thee; but

• See 1 KL 19 : 20.

postpone compliance with our Lord's command, until after the death of his probably sick or aged father." Webster and Wilkinson.

60. *But go thou, &c.* This corresponds to *follow me*, in Matthew, and does not signify that the disciple should go forth, on an immediate preaching tour, but that he should attach himself to Jesus, and thus prepare himself for the future ministry of the word. But yet, in a sense, they were all to be engaged, from that time onward, in the work of preaching Christ, as they might have opportunity. They were not, however, to separate themselves from the company of Jesus, unless directed by him thus to do.

61. *Another said, &c.* As far as the words are concerned, we have no means of knowing, whether this was a voluntary offer to follow Christ, or a compliance with his command to do this. A comparison of Matt. 8 : 21, with Luke 9 : 59, would make the latter the more probable supposition. *To bid farewell to them, &c.* Some translate : *to arrange or set in order the things, &c.* But the verb literally signifies, *to set off or apart, to set one's self apart, to take leave of or bid adieu*, and never, to my knowledge, has the signification above been given it. The common translation also gives the better sense. Our Lord would not have him even bid farewell to those at home, thus making his demand upon his immediate service, equally stern and decisive with that given in v. 60.

62. *No man, &c.* This is a proverbial expression, to indicate the necessity of a hearty and intent devotion to the business, in which one may be engaged. The construction of the plough in those times, was such, that it was necessary for the ploughman to grasp firmly and

let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

unremittingly the handle, and that no spot of ground might be passed over unturned, to lean forward, and fix his eyes intently upon his work. If he should be gazing elsewhere, or looking behind him, his work would be imperfect. A passage in Hesiod, one of the most ancient of the Greek poets, strikingly illustrates this. Of the ploughman, he says :

Let him attend his charge, and careful trace  
The right-lined furrow; gaze no more about,  
But have his mind intently on his work.

Thus our Saviour employed this imagery, to teach that his followers must engage in his service with their whole heart, and not be looking back upon the world, with interest in its pursuits, and regret at having left them. The sentiment is, that no one who professes to follow Christ, and withdraws from his active service, is fit for the kingdom of heaven; or more briefly: they will be disappointed, who hope to obtain salvation, without a full surrender of this world. *Is fit*; literally, *well placed, in a good position*. He has not that habit of entire self-consecration, which renders him suitable for God's service in the sanctuary above. Not having been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, true riches can never safely be intrusted to his keeping.

## CHAPTER X.

1-16. THE SEVENTY INSTRUCTED AND SENT OUT. *Capernaum*. As this mission of the Seventy took place, while our Lord was yet at Capernaum, it belongs properly before the journey up to Jerusalem, referred to in vs. 51, 52 of the preceding chapter. The immediate occasion of sending forth so numerous a band seems to have been the desire, on the part of our Lord, that all the towns and cities of Galilee, from which he was

## CHAPTER X.

**A**FTER these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face in every city and

*a* Mat. 10: 1; *Ma.* 6: 7.

now taking his final departure, should be visited with the proffer of salvation. He excused the Twelve from this mission, because he wished their constant attendance upon him, in this closing period of his ministry, when every thing was verging towards the last great events, his crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and ascension to glory. He sent forth *seventy* disciples, with reference to this number being a multiple of the perfect number *seven*, thus symbolizing the full and complete offer of salvation, made at this time to the people, among whom he had mostly labored, and of whom he was now taking his final leave. Stier refers the number *seventy*, to the seventy Elders (Ex. 24: 1. 4; Numb. 11: 10), standing alongside of the number *twelve*, which corresponds to the number of tribes. In regard to the selection of so comparatively large a number, it may be referred to our Lord's desire, that every town and village might be visited, in season for his disciples to report to him the result of their labors, before the time of his passion. See v. 17. The instructions given to them were of the same general tenor, with those previously given to the Twelve (Matt. 10: 1-42; Luke 9: 1-6). In several instances, they are conveyed in the same words. Compare v. 2 with Matt. 9: 37, 38; v. 3 with Matt. 10: 16; v. 4 with Matt. 10: 9; vs. 5, 6 with Matt. 10: 12, 13; vs. 7, 8 with Matt. 10: 11; v. 9 with Matt. 10: 7, 8; vs. 10-12 with Matt. 10: 14, 15. A comparison of these portions with the Notes on Matthew, will serve to explain all that is difficult. Stier very properly refers to a general feature, in which these instructions differ from those formerly given to the Twelve. "It is evident from the far-stretching prophetic instructions given to the apostles in Matthew x., that the language

place, whether he himself would come.

2 Therefore said he unto them, 'The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: 'pray ye  
*b* Mat. 9: 37, 38; John 4: 35. *c* 2 Th. 3: 1.

used there, refers to a permanent office for a future mission, (the present being only a small typical one,) yea, to a certain continuation of the office through successors for all time, but that here every thing is limited to the present temporary mission of these Seventy."

1. *After these things* refers to what precedes. It is a general form of transition, and should not be pressed to a reference to what immediately precedes in the narrative, for the closing verses of the preceding chapter in Luke contain an incident, which occurred upwards of a year, previous to the sending forth of the Seventy. *Other seventy also*; more literally and correctly, *others, seventy* (in number). The word *others*, is employed in reference to the Twelve, sent out on the previous mission. Some erroneously put it in contradistinction to the messengers spoken of in 9: 51, for these persons were sent forth on their special errand, while our Lord was on his way to Jerusalem (see preliminary remarks at the commencement of the chapter), and consequently some time after the Seventy had departed on their mission. The object too of their respective missions was very dissimilar, the Seventy being sent forth to preach the gospel, and the two messengers, merely to make provision for the wants of the party travelling up to Jerusalem. *Before his face* does not here signify *in advance of*, but *from his presence*. Our Lord evidently did not personally visit these towns and villages, to which the Seventy were sent, for he almost immediately left Galilee. *Would come*, i. e. had a mind, or desired to come, if the duties which pressed upon him during his brief remaining sojourn on earth had permitted him.

2. *Therefore he said, &c.* It was in view of this great and ungathered harvest, that he appointed this band of la-

therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

3 Go your ways: 'behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4 'Carry neither purse, nor

*d* Mat. 10: 16.

*e* Mat. 10: 9, 10; *Ma.* 6: 8; *ch.* 9: 8.

borers to go forth. A similar declaration was made, on the sending forth of the Twelve. See N. on Matt. 9: 37, 38. *Would send forth*; literally, *would throw or cast forth*, referring here to the urgent haste, which the necessities of the harvest demanded. This word loses none of its force, in its application to the spiritual harvest, which is now in readiness for laborers, in almost every portion of the world.

8. *Go your ways*; literally, *depart*, a word of dismissal, with the slight additional notion of haste. *Behold, I send you, &c.* The opposition to our Lord was much more violent and inveterate, than when the Twelve had been commissioned and sent forth; and the mission of the Seventy was attended therefore with greater danger. This is consequently referred to, in the opening words of their commission; whereas in the instructions of the Twelve (see Matt. 10: 16), by being placed in the second grand division of the discourse, it seems to belong to more distant times. For this, as well as many other valuable hints, I take pleasure in acknowledging myself indebted to Alford. *Among wolves.* See N. on Matt. 10: 16.

4. It is worthy of remark, that in connection with the announcement of their dangerous mission, they are commanded to make no provision for their necessary wants, but to cast themselves with confidence, upon the divine support and protection. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i. p. 533) says, that in this direction to throw themselves upon the hospitality of those whom they visited, there was no departure from the simple manners of the country. "At this day the farmer sets out on excursions quite as extensive, without a para in his

scrip, nor shoes; and 'salute no man by the way.

5 'And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house.

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon

*f* 2 Kl 4: 29. *g* Mat. 10: 12.

purse; and the modern Moslem prophet of Tarshih, thus sends forth his apostles over this identical region. Neither do they encumber themselves with two coats, nor even take two pair of their coarse shoes, answering to the sandals of the ancients." In this fearless reliance upon divine support and protection, they were to go forth, deterred by no danger, nor depressed by the apparent power of their enemies, as though the conflict would not result in the complete and final victory of truth. *Salute no man, &c.* This should not be interpreted of a prohibition of the ordinary *salams* between travellers, but of those long-extended, and fulsome salutations, which in the excess of oriental politeness consumed much time. Their business required despatch, and they were to waste no time in those formal, tedious salutations, which Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i. p. 534) says, are now employed by the Druses and other non-Christian sects, and consume much valuable time. Dr. Jahn says, that the Arabians are so animated, on occasion of meeting their friends by the way, that they will repeat no less than ten times, the ceremony of grasping hands and kissing, and the interrogations respecting each other's health. This will account for the strict charge given to Gehazi by Elisha, not to salute any man on his way to the Shunammite's child. 2 Kings 4: 29.

6. *If the son of peace*, i. e. one so disposed to receive the truth, that he is worthy of the salutation of peace, with which you enter the house. *Son of peace* is one, whose inward peace results from the favor of God. Opposed to this is *children of wrath* (Eph. 2: 3), i. e. those upon whom the wrath of God

it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

7 <sup>4</sup> And in the same house remain, <sup>1</sup> eating and drinking such things as they give: for <sup>2</sup> the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

8. And into whatsoever city ye

<sup>1</sup> Mat. 10: 11. <sup>4</sup> 1 Co. 10: 27.  
<sup>2</sup> Mat. 10: 10; 1 Co. 9: 4, &c.; <sup>1</sup> 1 Th. 5: 18.

abides, and who are appointed unto destruction. *Shall rest upon.* Highly intensive in the original, the sense being one of permanent abiding rest. *If not, it shall turn, &c.* This shows that not the inmates of every family, are supposed to be ready to receive the gospel message. From those who rejected it, the blessing implied in the salutation, was to return again to those who pronounced it. *Shall turn to you again.* See N. on Matt. 10: 13.

7. *Such things as they give*; literally, *such as belongs to them, that which they have.* The idea is that those who entertain them, are not to be pressed to provide a more expensive entertainment, than they can well afford. *For the laborer, &c.* This is the great principle, on which they are to freely partake of the hospitalities of those, to whom they are sent to preach the gospel. They were laboring for the good of those to whom they ministered, and had a right to receive in return, the supply of their temporary wants. See Rom. 15: 27; 1 Cor. 9: 13, 14; 1 Tim. 5: 18. For *hire* in Luke, we have *meat* (i. e. food) in Matthew. There is no difference in sentiment, as *meat* is taken generically for every thing necessary to life. *Go not from house, &c.* This explains Matt. 10: 11, on which, see Note. Olshausen thinks, that our Lord intends to warn them against leaving the cottages of the poor, and seeking instead the dwellings of the rich. This is implied in the direction, which however is expressed in general terms. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i. p. 534) finds another reason in the conviviality and loss of time, which this acceptance

enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

9 <sup>1</sup> And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not,

<sup>1</sup> Ch. 9: 2. <sup>m</sup> Mat. 8: 2; & 4: 17; & 10: 7; v. 11.

of entertainments and feasts would beget, on which account the evangelists were to avoid these festive occasions, remembering that "they were sent, not to be honored and feasted, but to call men to repentance, prepare the way of the Lord, and proclaim that the kingdom of heaven was at hand."

8. *Receive you*, i. e. welcome you with the proffer of hospitality. See N. on Matt. 10: 14.

9. *Heal the sick.* They are specially directed to perform this deed of mercy; but that their power to work miracles was enlarged beyond this, is evident from the report, which they made (v. 17), that even the devils were subject unto them, through our Lord's name. Thus oftentimes, the measure of the divine blessing exceeds the promise. I cannot agree with Olshausen, in regarding these cures in the light of spiritual rewards for bodily services. While it was undoubtedly true, that the sick of such only, as had faith to apply in behalf of their friends, for the application of the healing gift, were cured, yet to make this display of mercy, a mere reward for the hospitalities received from a family, would deprive it of its highest glory and significancy. We are to refer it, and the power also which they had over demons, to the same general purpose for which our Lord himself wrought miracles, as credentials of his divine mission, and as symbolical of the design of his advent, to destroy the works of the devil, to heal men of their spiritual infirmities, and restore them to the moral likeness of God.

10. *Into the streets.* Reference is had here to the wide streets or avenues,

go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

11 "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

13 "Woe unto thee, Chorasin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have

<sup>a</sup> Mat. 10:14; ch. 9:5; Ac. 18:51; & 18:6. <sup>c</sup> Mat. 10:15; Ma. 6:11. <sup>p</sup> Mat. 11:31. <sup>q</sup> Ex. 8:6.

leading without the city. The disciples are therefore represented, as leaving the place, when they perform this symbolical act. *And say.* Proclaim in public hearing.

11. *Dust.* See N. on Matt. 10:14. *Notwithstanding be ye sure, &c.* The repetition of this from v. 10, where it was an annunciation of mercy, is designed to be twofold in its application. It was intended to be a solemn averment, that the message of salvation had been truly brought and rehearsed to them, so that their rejection of it was without excuse. This merciful presentation was also to be an element in their condemnation; "the savor to them of death unto death" (2 Cor. 2:16). *Be ye sure of this;* literally, *know this,* let it be forever a matter of full assurance.

12. See N. on Matt. 10:15. *In that day.* In Matthew, *the day of judgment. For Sodom.* Matthew adds *Gomorrhah.* The two places are generally found named in connection.

13. It has been a question, whether the woes here pronounced upon these guilty cities, are identical with those pronounced in Matt. 11:20, or spoken at a different time and occasion. Olshausen inclines to the belief, that they were originally spoken in the connection in which Luke has here placed

been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 "And thou, Capernaum, which art 'exalted to heaven, 'shall be thrust down to hell.

16 "He that heareth you heareth me; and 'he that despiseth you despiseth me; 'and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

<sup>r</sup> Mat. 11:23. <sup>s</sup> See Ge. 11:4; De. 1:28; Is. 14:18; Je. 51:58. <sup>t</sup> See Ex. 26:20; & 39:18. <sup>u</sup> Mat. 10:40; Ma. 9:37; John 18:20. <sup>v</sup> 1 Th. 4:8. <sup>y</sup> John 5:23.

them, that is, at the close of our Saviour's labors in Galilee, although Matthew has not inserted them unfittingly into his context. It seems, however, more free from objections, to suppose them, like other weighty sayings of our Lord, to have been repeated at different times. The reference to Sodom in the preceding verse, we know to have been repeated almost verbatim from Matt. 10:15; and why may not these woes denounced upon Capernaum and its adjacent towns, have been spoken on two distinct occasions? On the verbal interpretation of vs. 13-15, see Ns. on Matt. 11:21-23.

16. This verse is a varied repetition of Matt. 10:40, on which see Note. The vital and indissoluble union, subsisting between Christ and his followers, rendering every act of love or hatred exercised towards them, the same as done to him, is here asserted in the fullest and most explicit terms. The union also between Christ and the Father, affirmed in Matthew, is here reiterated, as a ground of assurance in times of peril and persecution, and as giving dignity and authority to the message, which they were to convey to their fellow-men. *He that heareth you, &c.* The words, *he that heareth me heareth him that sent me,* are to be supplied

17 And 'the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

• V. 1.

from the force of the antithesis with what follows.

17. Luke here anticipates the return of the Seventy, which could not have taken place, until a considerable time after, probably just before the Dedication, when Jesus was at Jerusalem. Luke undoubtedly continued the narrative, in order to finish what he had to say of this mission. This shows us how little we can depend upon him, for a chronological view of our Lord's ministry. *Returned.* Some time had doubtless been appointed for their return, although we can hardly suppose that they returned in a body, but at short intervals, one after another. *With joy* at the success of their mission, and the subjection of demons to their authority. This appears from the following clause: *Even the devils, &c.* Not only sicknesses and diseases were subject to us *through thy name* (see Acts 3 : 6; 4 : 10; 9 : 34), but *even* the demons were cast out at our word. With what a simple, child-like joy was this report given of their labors. They had been conscious of a strength not their own. The power, as well as grace of the gospel, had been realized by them in this mission, and in view of their new and rich experience, they are filled with joy. Indeed, so exultingly did they report this new power given to them over demons, that our Lord deemed it necessary to caution them against making this a principal source of joy (see v. 20). They were to rejoice rather that their names were written in heaven. As they had only been commanded to heal the sick, it is an evidence of the strength and activity of their faith, that they should have even made the attempt to cast out demons. The strong faith and active piety required for this act, is seen in Matt. 17 : 21, where the apostles themselves had failed in its exercise. Thus often in the humble believer is seen a strength of faith and confidence in God, not found

18 And he said unto them, 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

α John 2 : 81; & 16 : 11; Ra. 9 : 1; & 12 : 8, 9.

in those of higher attainments and official standing. *Through thy name*; literally, *in thy name*, i. e. clothed with thy authority. The preposition in the original implies, that they were *in* or *surrounded* by their Master's influence.

18. These remarkable words are to be regarded, as a figurative representation of the downfall of the kingdom of Satan, as it passed before the prophetic eye of Jesus. It was not in this subjugation of these demons to the Seventy, in which this Satanic fall consisted, although the report of his disciples suggested the utterance of this triumphal declaration. It was rather a prophetic sweep of spiritual vision, embracing the total downfall of the prince of darkness, as it would go on and be consummated in the future history of the church. The verb *I beheld*, is the imperfect. *I was seeing*, embracing the past as well as the future, the whole awful downfall of Satan from the loss of his first estate, to the consummation of his doom, at the judgment of the great day (Jude 6). The time of the verb is not to be restricted to the immediate past, but, as Alford remarks, belongs to the period before the foundation of the world, when the Lord had his abode in the bosom of the Father. In like manner Olshausen refers the verb to past time in general. With this Webster and Wilkinson accord: "It may be that the figure is taken from a reality, cognizable by our Lord in the spiritual world in time past (2 Pet. 2 : 4; Jude 6), present, or future (Rev. 9 : 1; 12 : 9)." The use of the word *Satan*, in this connection, shows clearly, that evil spirits are under a prince or leader, and that our Lord did not use the term by way of accommodation to Jewish superstition. It was a veritable, personal existence, and not a mere personification of evil. *As lightning*, i. e. swift, sudden, and decisive, as a thunderbolt from the skies. The additional idea of splen-



19 Behold, 'I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding, in this re-

do Ma. 16: 18; Aa. 28: 5.

dor may also be involved in the comparison. See Isa. 14: 12, where we may translate, *bright and morning star, how art thou fallen, &c.* Webster and Wilkinson refer the expression to the sudden manifestation of divine power, as in 17: 24. But the eye of our Lord rests upon Satan's complete and final overthrow, rather than upon the power which effected it, and the comparison has reference to this principal thought. The words *from heaven*, may refer to his original state of glory and bliss (see Isa. 14: 12, where the previous glorious state of the king of Babylon is referred to), or the greatness of his fall from such a height of power and glory. The one interpretation almost of necessity involves the other. Some would reject every notice of a local nature, and refer it to a fall from eminence and power. So Webster and Wilkinson explain it, "expressing the loss of pre-eminence and power." But is not this implied in the local idea of Satan's ejection and downfall from heaven? The expression is evidently intended to embrace the whole catastrophe of the fall, ruin, and utter overthrow of the powers of darkness, represented here by Satan, their prince and leader.

19. Our Lord now extends the promise of miraculous power, at first limited to the healing of the sick (v. 9). Here they are to tread unharmed on serpents (generally put for all kinds of poisonous reptiles), and scorpions (see N. on 11: 12), the literal sense of which, as denoting protection from all dangers, even those most imminent and perilous, while it is not to be rejected, does not wholly meet the demand of the context, which is evidently concerning the "old serpent" which is Satan, and whose agencies of evil in the earth, may well be represented under the imagery of loathsome

joice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because 'your names are written in heaven.

o Ex. 23: 22; Pa. 69: 28; La. 4: 3; Da. 12: 1; Phil. 4: 8; Ha. 12: 23; Re. 13: 8; & 20: 12; & 21: 27.

and poisonous reptiles. That spiritual evil is mainly referred to, is evident from the following clause, *over all the power of the enemy*, which is both supplementary and explanatory of this, and makes it include every form of evil. In the great contest here referred to, the issue of which will be the downfall of Satan and all his confederates, the promise is that the disciples shall receive no harm, but shall come off victorious from every foe. The agencies of physical evil are not to be excluded from the scope of the promise, since they, in a general sense, form a department of the kingdom of evil. *Over all the power*. This depends on *power* in the preceding clause, which must be repeated here in the sense of *authority*. The preposition rendered *over*, would have been better translated *against*, in a hostile and aggressive sense. *The enemy*. The adversary, Satan, referred to in v. 18, as is evident from the use of the article in the original. See 8: 12, compared with Matt. 12: 19; Mark, 4: 15. *Nothing shall by any means, &c.* The same idea is here expressed negatively for the sake of emphasis. The fall of Satan was evidence that the power they served was able to protect them from every hurtful influence. *By any means*; literally, *in any respect*. The form is intensive.

20. Having inspired his disciples with courage for the conflict in which they were to be engaged, by promising them victory over every foe, our Lord now cautions them against making this the chief ground of joy. Their personal acceptance with God, was that in view of which they were directed to rejoice. There is no selfishness in such joy, as at first glance there may seem to be. Personal salvation through the atonement of Christ, and secured by repent-

21 ¶ In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them

d Mat. 11: 25.

ance and faith in him, is always accompanied with a longing desire that others may be brought to the Saviour. To rejoice, therefore, in one's own personal union with Christ, is to rejoice in everything pertaining to a profession of his name, the salvation of men, the progress of truth, and the downfall of error. That joy must of necessity be ill-founded and defective, which arises solely from the success that attends our labors for Christ. The consciousness of a higher life within, interpenetrating and giving vitality to all our spiritual labors, and enabling us to say with the apostle, "to live is Christ," is that which should awaken in us the highest emotions of pleasure. Joy that results from any other source, becomes fitful and irregular in its exercise, rising high with every external indication of success, and depressed to an equal degree, when unsuccessful in the object of pursuit. But spiritual joy which springs from an assurance of acceptance with Christ, will always be permanent, well-regulated, and productive of all the Christian graces. The reference here to *demons* (v. 17) by the word *spirits*, shows conclusively, that sicknesses and diseases (see N. on Matt. 4: 24) are not referred to in v. 17, as some strangely imagine. With equal force may the word, in this connection, be arrayed against the preposterous notion, that the demons of the New Testament were the spirits of wicked dead men. *Are written*, &c. The imagery is founded on the idea, common to both the Old and New Testaments (see Exod. 32: 32; Ps. 69: 28; 87: 6; Phil. 4: 8; Heb. 12: 23), that heaven is a city, and that those who are entitled to its privileges of citizenship, have their names enrolled in a book or city-register. This is called in Rev. 3: 5; 18: 8; 20: 12; 21: 27,

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unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man

e Mat. 28: 18; John 3: 35; & 5: 27; & 17: 2.  
f John 1: 18; & 6: 44, 46.

the *book of life*, and the *Lamb's book of life*, from the fact, that the names of his followers are inscribed therein. *In heaven*, i. e. in the registry of heaven. The question may arise, as to the time when these names were thus inserted. Most unquestionably, when by faith in Christ, they were brought to realize their lost condition, and infinite need of Him, and thus through grace were restored to the privileges and immunities of God's kingdom, which they had forfeited, through rebellion against his authority and rule. But we must not, by a too close adherence to the figure of a book, in which are written the names of such as are restored to the citizenship of heaven, lose sight of the great fact, elsewhere abundantly taught in God's word, that it was by the elective grace of God manifested before the foundation of the world, that the names of these disciples were registered in heaven. This choice of them by the sovereign grace of God, to the bliss and glory of heaven, is that which our Lord holds up, as the source of all blessedness here and hereafter, and therefore as furnishing occasion for the liveliest joy. This is the great idea of the passage, and thus viewed relieves the joy here spoken of, from every charge of selfishness or narrow-minded reference to one's own personal interests, which the enemies of truth have made against it.

21, 22. These words of our Lord were so appropriately uttered here, as well as in Matt. 11: 25-27 (on which see Notes), that I am persuaded, with Doddridge, Bloomfield, Alford, and other sound and judicious commentators, that they were spoken on two distinct occasions, although in circumstances somewhat similar. There is nothing, as we have before mentioned (see N. on vs.

knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*.

23 And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, 'Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see:

24 For I tell you, <sup>a</sup> that many

g Mat. 13: 16. A 1 Pe. 1: 10.

13-15), to forbid the supposition, that weighty truths were sometimes repeated by our Lord, in order to give them a permanent lodgment in the minds of his disciples. In view of their simple and confiding love, what more natural than this ejaculation of thanks to that sovereign grace of his Father, which, overlooking those who were of exalted station and influence, selected as the repositories of truth, men in lowly condition, and of limited acquirements in human learning and wisdom? Webster and Wilkinson think, that the report of the Seventy adverted to the attachment of the lowly, and the opposition of the great. *Rejoiced in spirit*; literally, *exulted*, the word being expressive of the most intense joy. See N. on Matt. 5: 12. See also Acts 2: 26; 1 Pet. 4: 13; Rev. 19: 7. In Matt. 11: 25, the corresponding word is *answered*, the form of expression being there adapted to the preceding context (see Note on that passage). Here the context is one of jubilant triumph, and the words are indicative of an increase of joy, in view of the abundant grace of God, in gathering around him this little band of disciples, as the messengers of his love, and endowing them with such power against the adversary.

23, 24. See Ns. on Matt. 13: 16, 17. The word *kings*, is here substituted for *righteous men*, in Matthew, probably to give emphasis to the sovereign grace of God, in revealing these great truths to those of lowly condition, and as Steir remarks, "to magnify the dignity of those to whom the revelation of the Son in the flesh is vouchsafed."

prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

25 ¶ And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, 'Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

† Mat. 19: 16; & 23: 35.

25-37. PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN. *Near Jerusalem*. The question proposed by this lawyer, is not to be classed with those insidious and ensnaring questions, so often put to him by the Pharisees. The word *tempt* is to be taken, therefore, in the more general sense of testing our Lord's knowledge on a difficult point of casuistry. A similar example, but one not to be confounded with this (see 18: 18), is found in Matt. 22: 35, on which see Note. This incident took place just after our Lord had narrowly escaped being stoned by the infuriated Jews (see John 8: 59), and its locality must therefore have been in Jerusalem, or its immediate vicinity. Dr. Robinson, in his Harmony of the Gospels, places it a short time before the return of the Seventy, and its scene in the vicinity of Jerusalem and Bethany.

25. The question first proposed by the lawyer, must be regarded as the one of all others, in which the human family have the deepest interest. It is the same one which was proposed on another occasion, by a young ruler (Matt. 19: 16, on which see Note). Our Lord's reply was so shaped, as to draw from him an answer similar to that which Jesus himself returned to the lawyer who, in the temple, asked him which was the great commandment of the law. See N. on Matt. 22: 36-40. *Rose up* according to the ancient method of speaking, when one is about to do something, or put forth some effort. It does not necessarily imply hostility. *What shall I do?* Literally, *doing what*, as the means or cause. The structure of the original

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he answering said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy  
 & Da. 6: 5.

strength, and with all thy mind; and 'thy neighbor as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and "thou shalt live.

29 But he, willing to "justify

Le. 19: 18. m Le. 18: 5; Ne. 9: 29; Ex. 20: 11, 18, 21; Ro. 10: 5. \* Ch. 16: 15.

makes the inheriting eternal life, the principal end or object to be gained.

26, 27. *In the law.* As he was a lawyer, our Lord very naturally and properly refers him to the law, which it was his office and profession to explain. *How readest thou?* Webster and Wilkinson think that reference is had to the *Schema*, read every morning and evening, in which this precept is contained. *Thou shalt love, &c.* See N. on Matt. 22: 37. *Thy neighbor.* See N. on Matt. 5: 43. *As thyself.* In regard to the application of this command, see N. on Matt. 19: 19. "That the lawyer should at once lay his finger on the great commandment, which Christ himself quoted, as such (Matt. 22: 37-39), showed no little spiritual insight, and proved that he was superior to the range of his countrymen: he quotes rightly Deut. 6: 5, in connection with Lev. 19: 18, as containing the essence of the law." Trench.

28. *Thou hast answered right*, i. e. in accordance with the word of God. *This do.* The lawyer had inquired, what he *should do* to inherit eternal life. To this no other answer could be returned, than the one here given. If he kept these two commandments perfectly, without a single violation of their letter or spirit, he would *do* that which would entitle him to eternal life. Therefore our Lord replies: *this do and thou shalt live*, i. e. inherit eternal life. See v. 25.

29. The lawyer with great quickness of apprehension, saw into what a position his own answer had put him, viz., of asking a question, to which, almost in the same breath, he had himself been forced to give the true answer. The conviction may have flashed upon him, at the same moment, that a law of such universal and binding import, he could

never keep, so that any thing which he might *do*, would ensure his salvation. He therefore seeks, by a diversion of the main question to a sort of side-issue, to parry the force of the great truth, which he so unwittingly brought down upon himself, that salvation by works was impossible to be attained. He also wished to justify himself from the appearance of having proposed a question so easy of solution, and he therefore sought to draw our Lord into the discussion of a point, on which there was room for wide disagreement. The law says I must love my neighbor. *And who is my neighbor?* The word *and*, is not an unmeaning connective here, but unites this question with the main inquiry in v. 25, in the sense, *who then is my neighbor?* How am I to know whether I am obedient to the command, unless this question be first settled? Our Lord does not reply to this, by laying down a formal precept, or entering into a labored disquisition on the meaning of the word *neighbor*—a term of such general import, and yet so restricted in its application by the Jews—but he cites an example of disinterested love performed by a Samaritan, one who of all others would be excluded by the bigoted Jew from belonging to the class of persons implied in the word *neighbor*, and having held this example up to the admiration of the lawyer, draws from him, a second time, an answer to his own question, and one from which in the outset, he would have recoiled, that a Samaritan might be and was his neighbor. It is doubtful whether there can be found on record, so remarkable an instance of self-confutation from a man's own lips, as is furnished in this interview of Jesus with the lawyer.

himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Je-

30. *A certain man.* His condition in life is left undetermined, but that he was a Jew may be gathered from the fact, that he was on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho, which could not have been said of a Samaritan, who was not permitted to go to Jerusalem, and therefore could not be said to depart thence to another place. It might be assumed, also, that he was a Jew, having acknowledged claims upon the kindness and protection of the priest and Levite; for this brings out in more striking contrast the hard-hearted selfishness of these persons, when compared with the great benevolence of the Samaritan, upon whom the robbed and wounded traveller had no claims of family, kindred, or country. *Went down* (literally, *was going down*) from Jerusalem as the metropolis, and because Jericho lay geographically below it. See N. on Matt. 20: 17. *From Jerusalem to Jericho.* "This road passed through a wilderness (Jos. 16: 1), which was notorious for the robberies committed there." Alford. Coleman (p. 131) says that "this desert is composed of naked limestone hills, separated from each other by deep winding valleys and narrow gullies, covered with gravel and rounded water-worn stones." Jerome says, that one part of the road was so infamous for murders, that it was called the Red or Bloody Way; and that in his time a fort was there, garrisoned by Roman soldiers, to protect travelling. One of the most graphic descriptions of this dismal and dangerous road, is found in Thomson's Land and Book (vol. ii., p. 440). "We passed out at St. Stephen's gate, wound our way down into the narrow vale of Jehoshaphat, over the south point of Olivet, by the miserable remains of the city of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, and then prepared to descend, for you remember that we must go 'down to Jericho.' And, sure enough, down, down we did go, over

Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

slippery rocks, for more than a mile, when the path became less precipitous. Still, however, the road follows the dry channel of a brook for several miles farther, as if descending into the very bowels of the earth. How admirably calculated for robbers! After leaving the brook, which turns aside too far to the south, we ascended and descended naked hills for several miles, the prospect gradually becoming more and more gloomy. Not a house, nor even a tree, is to be seen; and the only remains are those of a large Khan, said to have been the inn, to which the Good Samaritan brought the wounded Jew. Not far from here in a narrow defile, an English traveller was attacked, shot, and robbed, in 1820. As you approach the plain, the mountains wear a more doleful appearance, the ravines become more frightful, and the narrow passages less and less passable. At length the weary pilgrim reaches the plain, by a long, steep declivity, and doubtless expects to step immediately into Jericho. But alas! no city appears, and after a full hour's ride, he pitches his tent in a dry, sultry plain of sand, sparsely sprinkled with burnt-up grass." *Fell among thieves*, i. e. he fell in with thieves, or more literally, robbers. The words *stripped* (literally, *having stripped*) him of his raiment, include the idea that he was despoiled of every thing which he had on or about his person. *Wounded him*; literally, *having inflicted blows upon him*. These blows were given him, doubtless, when he was first surrounded, either because he acted in self-defence, or in order to stun him, so that neither then nor afterwards could he give any alarm, until they had got beyond the reach of pursuit. No doubt in wanton cruelty also they inflicted additional blows, as they were about leaving him. *And departed*. This in the original is the only verb, the acts previously referred to having

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, ° he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came

° Ps. 88 : 11.

the participial form. Vivacity and emphasis are thus imparted to the narrative. *Half dead*; literally, *happening* (to be) *half dead*, i. e. as it were half dead, or in a well-nigh dying state. The precarious condition in which he was left, shows their heartless cruelty and unconcern as to what became of him.

31. *By chance*; literally, *by a coincidence*. Strictly speaking, nothing happens by chance. The coincidence of things not of necessity joined together, is what is meant by the expression. *There came down*, &c. As Jericho was a city of the priests, persons of this order would often pass to and from Jerusalem. Especially would they be obliged to visit Jerusalem, to perform their priestly functions in the order of their course. See N. on 1 : 5. The verb *came down* (literally, *was going down*), shows that the priest was on his way to Jericho. If we may assume that he was returning from the fulfilment of his priestly course (see N. on 1 : 5), it would render his conduct more glaringly offensive, since the law, whose functionary he was, enjoined the performance of acts of mercy. See Ex. 23 : 4, 5; Deut. 22 : 1-4; Isa. 57 : 7. *When he saw him*. This accounts for the fact of the priest's passing by on the opposite side of the way, for such is the meaning of *passed by on the other side*, in the original. The priest not only did not pause to render the sufferer any assistance, but as soon as he saw him, while yet at some distance from him, sought to pass by as far as possible from him, in order to put himself beyond any appeal, which the wounded man might make to him for assistance. All these circumstances are to be considered, as we look upon this exquisite piece of moral painting.

and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain ° Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

p John 4 : 9.

32. *A Levite*. In the New Testament, this refers to the descendants of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the sons of Levi (see Numb. 3 : 17), whose duty it was to assist the priests, and keep guard around the temple. This Levite was probably returning also from the temple service to Jericho, when he fell in with this wounded man. *Was at the place*. A varied form of expression for, *came to the place*. The following words, *came and looked at him*, are to be referred to his drawing near to the wounded man, and obtaining a clear view of his helpless condition. This makes his passing by on the opposite side of the way, more reprehensible even than the conduct of the priest. "The first exhibited selfishness instinctively; the second, upon calculation." Webster and Wilkinson.

33. *But* marks strongly the contrast between these two religious teachers of the Jews, and the despised Samaritan. Doddridge remarks, that it is admirably well judged, to represent the distress on the side of the Jew, and the mercy on that of the Samaritan. In like manner it may be remarked, that the force and appositeness of the parable is enhanced, by contrasting the conduct of the Samaritan with that of men of such public reputation as a priest and Levite. *Journeying, or being on a journey*. A heightening circumstance, for whereas the priest and Levite were probably returning only to their home in Jericho, and had ample time and opportunity for a compassionate act, the Samaritan had left home on a journey, and could comparatively ill afford the expense or loss of time, to which his benevolence subjected him. He might have plead equally with them, the danger to be apprehended from robbers lurking in the vicinity. But

**34** And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

he took no counsel of either his fears or prudence, but gave himself up to the promptings of his unselfish and benevolent nature. *Had compassion on him.* See N. on Matt. 9:36. Had this Samaritan traveller acted on the principle laid down by the Jews, he would have passed by the wounded man, as one who had no claims whatever upon his benevolence. But acting from a higher and nobler impulse, he hastened to the relief of the man, and thus compelled the lawyer to confess to Jesus, that his conduct on this occasion was such, as to entitle him to the relation of neighbor to the poor Jew.

**34.** *Went to him*; literally, *having gone to him*, which throws the principal emphasis on the words, *bound up his wounds*, which follow. It was not in his approach to the wounded man, but in his active benevolence, that the conduct of this Samaritan differed from that of the priest and Levite. *Pouring in (or on) oil and wine.* This was a common remedial application for wounds; and the Samaritan seems, as a traveller, to have been provided with it in case of need. Does not this state of preparation indicate that active benevolence was his ruling characteristic? Bloomfield thinks that in this instance, the oil and wine were not used in mixture, but separately, the wine to cleanse the wounds, and the oil to allay the pain, and keep the wounded portions from becoming rigid and inflamed. All was done in a deliberative and orderly manner, indicating no other haste than what was required to put the wounded man in a condition to be removed to the inn. The lonely place, and its exposure to robbers, either those who had assaulted the wounded man, or others who might be prowling around, make this calm and self-possessed conduct of the Samaritan very striking. If the

**35** And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest

wounded man was stripped to a state of entire nudity, the Samaritan must have taken a portion of his own garments, to supply suitable bandages, for it is not at all likely that he came provided with bandages for such a contingency. *Set him on his own beast.* He did not bind up and anoint the wounded man, and then think that his work of benevolence was done, but conveyed him away to an inn on his own beast. I would not press the literal force of words too far, but as Bengel remarks, the verb in itself implies labor and exertion. It was with great difficulty that he set him upon the beast, and all the way to the inn, over rough and steep declivities (see N. on v. 30), he was probably obliged to sustain and support him, to prevent his falling, through weakness, from the animal. All this should be considered, in estimating the character of the Good Samaritan. *An inn.* See N. on 2:7. The word here refers to a public inn. See extract from Thomson's Land and Book in N. on v. 30. *Took care of him.* The residue of that day, and the whole of the following night, he attended to the wants of the wounded man, denying himself the usual repose so necessary to a traveller. But the climax of his goodness was not yet reached. This was reserved for his parting adieu in the morning.

**35.** *When he departed*; literally, *having gone forth* from the khan. He had not departed, as is evident from the following words. It was with a delicate reference to the feelings of the wounded man, that the Samaritan waited, until he had gone forth from the house, before he paid the expense already incurred, and pledged himself for what should accrue hereafter. *He took out* of his girdle. The verb implies rapid, hasty action, and is opposed to the slow, lingering motion of one who

more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three,

gives his money grudgingly. Webster and Wilkinson well render it, *having pulled out*. Some take the word in the sense, *having paid down*, but this adheres less closely to the original, and furnishes no better sense. *Two pence*. For the value of this silver coin, which was the price of a day's labor, see N. on Matt. 20: 2. *To the host*, i. e. the landlord or innkeeper. It is erroneous to suppose that this money was given to pay his own expenses, for these had doubtless been liquidated before he left the inn. It was intended to make provision for the wants of the wounded man. It is quite unlikely that he had a large sum by him. He had taken only what was sufficient to defray the expenses of his journey. But in order that the host might have an earnest of his good intentions towards the sick man, he gives him, on his departure, a small sum with the promise, that on his return, he would be responsible for his further necessary charges. *Take care of him*. This is the same verb employed in v. 34, to designate the care taken of him by the Samaritan himself. He would have the innkeeper as assiduous in his attentions to the wounded man, as he had been himself. *Spendest more*, i. e. above the two denarii, which he had just given him. *Come again*; literally, *return hither again*. See 19: 16, where the verb has the same fulness of sense. *I will repay thee*, i. e. I will defray all the expenses attending this man's recovery. This was the finishing touch to one of the most charming pictures of benevolence, ever presented to the eye of man. When the greedy avarice of innkeepers, especially in ancient times, and in oriental countries, is considered, the promise to pay all the expenses incurred by the man until his recovery, displays, as hardly any other circumstance could do, the benevolence of this Samaritan. Stier sums up his compassionate love in these striking words: "he was moved with pity as to the past, help

thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shew-

for the present, and considerate care for the future."

36, 37. It is remarked here by Olshausen and Alford, that our Lord's inquiry elicits this answer from the questioner himself, but in an inverted form. The inquiry was, *who is my neighbor?* The answer drawn by our Lord from the lawyer was virtually, *the Samaritan is my neighbor*, since, if this man's compassionate service to the Jew was such as to entitle him, in the lawyer's estimation, to be regarded as the Jew's neighbor, then by a parity of reasoning, the conduct of the lawyer to a Samaritan, should answer to the relationship, which he had just acknowledged. In other words, the obligation and exercise of kindness was to be mutual. Hence our Lord closes with the brief but pertinent direction: *Go and do thou likewise*. Let the same law of love regulate all your acts. Show kindness to any of your fellow-creatures, be he Jew or Samaritan, who stands in need of it. It is noticeable that the lawyer did not reply in direct language, *the Samaritan*, but *he that showed mercy on him*, an answer less repugnant to his Jewish pride and prejudice, although in sense the same. In this periphrastic reply, he undesignedly repeated the praiseworthy character of the Samaritan, in showing mercy to the suffering man.

Olshausen, Alford, and others, trace in this compassionate conduct of the Samaritan, a figurative representation of that one great act of mercy, which Jesus came on earth to perform. While it is true that his atonement for sin underlies all acts of charity and mercy done by man, yet this method of allegorizing is very unsafe, and leads often to the wildest extravagances. The method of interpretation, which finds our Saviour in the Good Samaritan, will seek also to discover the hidden meaning of the traveller, the priest and the Levite, and the innkeeper, and even all the minor circumstances of the



ed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

parable. Indeed, as Webster and Wilkinson remark (having Trench's exposition doubtless in their eye), "some have gone so far, as to regard the priest and Levite, emblematical of Abraham, Moses, or Aaron. In the good Samaritan, they trace our Lord himself; the wine and the oil are the blood and Spirit of Christ; the inn, his church; the host, his ministers; the two pence are the two sacraments, or the Old and New Testaments." It would be very pertinent and proper to employ some of the persons and circumstances of the parable by way of illustration, especially the love and kindness of the Good Samaritan, as setting forth that of Christ; but to interpret the parable as designed to typify the recovery of man from sin, with all its economical provisions and arrangements in the Old and New Testaments, is a perversion of the design of the parable, and at best but solemn trifling. The simple purpose of the story, was to instruct the lawyer in that very thing of which he was ignorant, the obligation and extent of the law of love, the exercise of which, blinded by Jewish prejudice, he had limited to his own nation. A great truth was taught, and duty enjoined, in the *Go and do likewise*; and we need not seek to find in the parable, the doctrine of the atonement, or from fancied analogies, force it to convey a meaning not originally intended. But this, as has before been in sense remarked, does not forbid our employment of this parable, to illustrate the love of Christ towards rebellious and dying man. Stier well expresses it: "An attempt to interpret allegorically the individual details, as, for example, the difference between oil and wine, the beast, the inn, the host, the two pence, may easily degenerate into trifling, but spiritual Christians of all times have not been able to resist seeing in the whole parable, a picture of man lying in sin and misery, whom neither law nor Levitical institutions

38 ¶ Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain wo-

can help, and to whom the mercy of Christ comes, whom they [a short time previous, see John 8: 48] angrily called a Samaritan."

38-42. JESUS IS ENTERTAINED AT THE HOUSE OF MARTHA AND MARY. *Bethany*. Critics have not been wanting, who have maintained that the sisters here spoken of, were not the Martha and Mary of John, but women of Galilee, one of the villages of which being here referred to. Others admit the identity of the persons, but yet maintain, that the village here mentioned was one situated in Galilee. But that these were the sisters of Lazarus, and that their home was in Bethany in Judea, there can be no question. Jesus had attended the feast of Dedication, which was celebrated eight days with many sacrifices (see N. on John 10: 22). During this time, what would be more likely, than that he should have his lodgings in Bethany, as he afterwards did in the week of his passion? In John 8: 59, it appears that Jesus had barely escaped being stoned, and that in consequence of the imminent peril in which he was placed, he left the temple, and probably the city. As he was on his way to Bethany (see N. on v. 25), he held the conversation with the lawyer, as narrated in vs. 25-37, after which he passed on to the house of Martha and Mary, as here referred to. This view may not remove every difficulty, which attends the assigning this incident its proper place in the gospel narrative. But it is so comparatively free from objections, that no expositor, who seeks to remove rather than find difficulties, can hesitate to adopt it as the true one.

38. *As they went forth from the city*. See N. on John 8: 59. Alford is disposed to take these words in their widest sense, of his last journey from Galilee, which ended in his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem. But the chain of events is here so well defined and unbroken, that we may safely refer it,

man named 'Martha received him into her house.

89 And she had a sister called

q John 11: 1; & 12: 2, 3.

as has been remarked, to his departure from the city, by the way of the Mount of Olives to Bethany. *He entered*; literally, *he himself entered*, on which Bengel remarks that Jesus did not often himself enter a village. This was doubtless true of the latter days of his ministry, when the increasing jealousy and hostility of his enemies, rendered it prudent for him to avoid the more public places. But in his circuits through Galilee, we are expressly informed that he went through all the towns and villages preaching the gospel of the kingdom. See 13: 22; Matt. 9: 35; Mark 6: 56. *A certain woman named Martha.* Whether she was unmarried, or a widow, or had a husband still living, is uncertain. She was undoubtedly the elder sister, and to her probably the house belonged; at all events, she seems both here and in John 11: 1-44, 12: 2, to have been the most prominent person in the family. *Received him.* This is a common expression, to denote a hospitable reception. See 19: 6; 9: 53. *Into her house.* Webster and Wilkinson think that she possessed the house, in right of her husband. That the whole family was one of some consideration, is evident from the fact, that many persons came even from Jerusalem, to condole with the sisters, after the death of their brother. See John 11: 19.

39. *A sister.* Probably her only sister, as we read of no other one. *Which also* (as well as his disciples) *sat at Jesus' feet*, to hear his words, and learn more of the heavenly truths which were falling from his lips. Her position at the feet of Jesus, is not to be referred to that occupied by learners in presence of their teacher (see Acts 22: 3), but to her confiding, loving spirit, which drew her beside the Master, in humble attitude, to listen to the words of grace which fell from his lips. The word *also* is taken here by some, as an additional grace, which Mary possessed over Mar-

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Mary, which also 'sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered

r 1 Co. 7: 32, &c. s Luke 8: 35; Ac. 22: 3

tha. She not only gave her Lord an external welcome and preparation of hospitality, in common with her sister Martha, but the inward welcome and love of the heart. The word *sat* has in the original the force of *having come and sat*. The participial form shows the subordination of this act, to the hearing of Jesus' words, which takes the verbal form. It is of no avail to be in Jesus' presence, unless his words are listened to, with an obedient loving spirit. *His word*, i. e. his discourse on things pertaining to the kingdom, which he was now setting up in the hearts of men. We see from this, how unceasing were his labors of love, and how he improved every opportunity, by the way or in the house, to instruct men in the things pertaining to their salvation.

40. Opposed to this quiet, childlike position of Mary at her Master's feet, are the bustling, overburdened, anxious movements of Martha, hurrying to and fro, to make such provisions for the entertainment of Jesus, as she thought befitting so great a personage. This was in a measure both right and suitable. The best and most valuable of our possessions, are to be laid at His feet, who is our Lord and Redeemer. But we should never forget, that such an external offering, unless accompanied by the service and affection of the heart, is nothing but a shallow and empty parade. The beasts of the forest are already his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. The world is his and the fulness thereof. The offering unto Him of thanksgiving, and the payment of vows of obedience, are what He requires. See Ps. 50: 8-15. Here was Martha's mistake. She lost sight of the internal and spiritual, in her over-anxiety for that which was external and imposing to the eye. *But* (contrasted with Mary) *Martha was cumbered* (literally *distracted, over-occupied*)

about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me

*about much serving*, i. e. about the preparation for the table, and other duties of hospitality, which with the orientals was a cardinal virtue, and which, on this occasion, Martha wished to be performed on a scale befitting the dignity of the guest she was entertaining. She was by no means wanting in true respect for Jesus. Indeed it was her over-estimate of the importance of showing him this external respect, that led her into the mistake, for which she was reproved by the Master. It seems to have been her natural turn or disposition, to be active and watchful in domestic affairs, to have every thing done in proper time and order, and to fulfil all the duties which pertained to a good housewife (see N. on Matt. 26:7). All this was right and becoming, but, as we have remarked, ought not to have been suffered to interfere with the unspeakable privilege which she enjoyed, of communing with Jesus, and listening to his heavenly conversation. *Much serving*, i. e. the great preparations which she was making for the entertainment. *Came to him*; literally, *having come to him*. The original word implies a sudden approach, or coming upon one, and is well suited to express the impatience and petulance with which Martha hastened into the room where Jesus was sitting, to censure him for detaining her sister from the duties of the house. Some expositors attribute this ill-humor to the consciousness, that she was permitting herself to lose the spiritual entertainment which her sister was enjoying, through her undue zeal for that which was comparatively of so little importance. *Lord*, "so she begins reverently, but soon becomes impolite and afterwards actually rude, to her great guest." Stier. *Dost thou not care?* More literally, *is it no concern to you?* The words convey on their face, a very impertinent and presumptuous rebuke, on the part of Martha. It was the result, however, of her extreme anxiety to honor Jesus with a worthy

to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered and

entertainment; and hence he replied to her in words of tenderness and love, gently admonishing her for her undue anxiety, and pointing her to the ONE THING NEEDFUL above all others, which Mary was seeking to obtain, while sitting at his feet. In the overburdened, anxious, fretful Martha, is exposed to view a leaf of human character, written with many things, which the *Marthas* of all times and countries may read and ponder upon, much to their advantage, and the comfort of those around them. *Hath left me alone*, indicates that Mary had previously been aiding her sister in household affairs. It may be that passing through the room where Jesus sat, she caught a word or two of his conversation, and was so charmed and interested, that she sat down so enwrapped and absorbed, as to forget all things else which demanded her attention. *Bid her therefore*, &c. Martha would not herself call Mary away, but would have her rebuked by the Master himself, for her inattention to household affairs. *Therefore*, because she has left me alone. *Help me*; literally, *lay hold along with me*, like our phrase, *lend a helping hand*, take hold in good earnest. The word conforms well to Martha's energetic spirit and temper, now thoroughly aroused to action, in her desire to show honor to her guest, by the best entertainment it was in her power to furnish. There is also an impatient and covert rebuke of Jesus, contained in these words: Bid her assist me in my pressing cares and labors, instead of talking to her about the things to which she is now listening. "Are we doing injustice to dear Martha with this interpretation? Her intention was good enough, but she was as confused and disturbed as we describe it, and all this in consequence of the unquiet of a soul, which has much to do only in connection with and about Him." Stier.

41. *Martha, Martha*, The repetition is an emphatic call upon her attention.

said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

42 But 'one thing is needful;

to the solemn and weighty truth he was about to utter. She was all excitement, but her name so tenderly and solemnly repeated, arrests and allays her angry feelings, and places her in a proper posture, as one who is to be instructed of Jesus, instead of assuming to teach him what to say or do. *Art careful and troubled*. The former of these would be more literally translated, *art anxious*, the verb etymologically signifying, *to be divided, or distracted* with cares and anxieties; the latter signifies *troubled*, and is based on the idea of a *stirring up* or *disturbance*, as in a bustle or crowd. The former relates therefore to inward anxiety; the latter, to outward bustle and confusion. *Many things* is here opposed to the *one thing needful*, and is a gentle intimation of the needless pains to which Martha had put herself to provide for his entertainment, whose meat it was to do the will of him who sent him, and to finish his work (John 4: 34). Still I would not press this antithesis so far as to make our Lord's words a rebuke to Martha for getting up this entertainment. Jewish feasts were, so to speak, one of the institutions of the land; and had Martha violated this common custom, she would have been guilty of great disrespect to her Lord. But yet Jesus designs to teach her, that when the two things are brought into direct and open comparison, the one idea, which engrossed the mind of Mary, constituted that which was alone needful, while her care and anxiety were about things of comparatively trivial importance. A general truth is taught here, which serves as a great landmark of duty, but is not to be pressed to teach, that Martha did that which was displeasing to Jesus in providing this entertainment.

42. *But one thing is needful*, or more literally, *there is need of one thing*. What trifling has been employed in referring, with Michaelis and some other

and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

† Pa. 37: 4.

interpreters, these sublime words to one single, simple dish, which our Lord deemed sufficient for his wants. Even Stier, who attaches to these words their high significancy, says that they "stand between two sentences, the first of which stands with the many dishes, whereas the second evidently passes over to the spiritual application, and the middle sentence (i. e. "one thing is needful") forms thus the medium of comparison, being applicable in both senses." There is indeed an antithesis between the *one* of this clause, and the *many* which goes before; but the contrast is not so much in the number or quantity designated by these words, as in the heavenly and spiritual, on the one hand, and the earthly and sensual, on the other. In other words, the antithesis embraces the whole idea of Martha on the one hand, anxious and overburdened by the many cares which were crowding upon her, and Mary, on the other, sitting calmly at the feet of Jesus, and giving her undivided attention to that *one thing*, which was needful to the wants of her immortal soul. How it is possible that any one can degrade this reply of Christ, to a mere polite intimation, that one dish was all that was needful for the supply of his wants, is truly wonderful, and can only be accounted for on the principle, that the minds of some interpreters are so constituted, that they take more pains apparently to adopt strange and improbable expositions, than they do to ascertain what is the simple and legitimate meaning of a given passage. What this one thing is, of which there is such imminent need, we are informed in the next clause, as being the object of Mary's choice. It was *that good part* or *portion* of the heavenly inheritance, which Mary was by faith in Jesus receiving into her soul, and of which she could never be deprived. It was personal salvation, which was the object of her choice, and this was of infinitely more

## CHAPTER XI.

AND it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased,

importance to her than all worldly blessings combined. Our Lord could not therefore bid her leave his feet, nay rather would he have Martha herself come and sit beside him, to be instructed in the way of salvation. We are not, however, to draw from this unwarrantable inference, that our Lord would not have persons attend to their own household affairs, and with watchful care and diligence superintend their domestic concerns. His rebuke is directed rather against that restless, bustling, querulous anxiety about the affairs of life, which leaves little or no time for spiritual duties and enjoyments. It is aimed at those who reverse the rule here laid down, making the one thing needful to be a zealous regard for the external duties of life, and giving to the preparation for eternity only now and then a moment of attention, as the mind is temporarily relieved from its overwhelming cares and anxieties. We are not hastily to assume from this incident, that Martha was destitute of true religion. The indication is quite clear that she was possessed at this time, as we know she was afterwards (John 11: 27), of vital piety. She erred, but rather from a mistaken view of the true mode of honoring Christ, than from any real disrespect manifested toward him. She committed a mistake, which was very natural in the circumstances in which she was placed, but which when enlightened in reference thereto, she was doubtless ready to acknowledge and renounce with tears of penitence. *Hath chosen* refers to Mary's own voluntary choice and agency in receiving the blessing. *Good part*, as the etymology of the word shows, is something *portioned out* or *assigned*; and hence as Olshausen and Stier observe, points to the elective or communicated grace of God. Thus here, as elsewhere, God's sovereignty and man's free agency are combined in delightful union, neither impairing nor interfering

one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

with the other, but serving rather for mutual adornment and strength.

## CHAPTER XI.

1-13. JESUS TEACHES HIS DISCIPLES HOW TO PRAY. *Near Jerusalem.*

1. *As he was praying.* Our Lord oftentimes prayed with his disciples, but there was at this time a holy fervor, and wrestling importunity, which inspired them with a fresh desire to be taught a more perfect form and manner of performing this duty. *In a certain place.* We have no means of knowing the exact locality, as this portion of the gospel is peculiar to Luke, and we can therefore obtain no light from the other evangelists. *When he ceased.* These words do not simply indicate that the disciples did not interrupt Jesus, but waited until he had finished his prayer. An interruption so rude and ill-timed, is hardly to be conceived, and needed no denial. But the idea intended to be conveyed is, that when he ceased praying, there was a profound silence, which was broken only by the request here made. The language indicates the impressive solemnity of the scene, and the profound reverence with which the disciple begged to be taught the form and spirit of prayer. *One of his disciples*, who acted as spokesman for the others, as appears from the words *teach us*. "It is supposed that this request was made by a new convert." (Webster and Wilkinson.) Stier takes a better view: "We need not suppose that the disciple asking here the Lord, had not heard the Sermon on the Mount; to how many things had the disciples listened, without either understanding it according to their Master's intention, or keeping it in their mind and applying it." *As John taught, &c.* We have no allusion to this fact, except here. It was very consonant with the strictness and regularity of John's habits, that he

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

a Mat. 6: 9.

should have prescribed forms of prayer, to be used by his disciples at different times and occasions. If so, the brief and comprehensive simplicity of our Lord's form of prayer, suited to all ages, conditions, and circumstances, stands in marked contrast to the forms instituted by John, as well as to the still more prolix forms observed by the Pharisees.

2-4. This is doubtless intended to be a repetition of the form, given in the Sermon on the Mount. See Ns. on Matt. 6: 9-13. It is given here by Luke, in a somewhat abridged form. The words *which art in heaven*, together with the preceding word *our*, are omitted in several MSS. and versions, which Alford approves and follows in his text, and the insertion of which, Olshausen regards of questionable authority. But it is far easier to account for their omission in some MSS., than for their introduction into others, in case, as the theory supposes, they were borrowed from Matthew. It is a fact also, that the great majority of the MSS. are in favor of the commonly received reading.

3, 4. *Day by day*, "for that day's need," or "for that day." (Alford.) In Matthew we have *this day*. There is no essential difference. *Our sins*. This is a stronger expression than the corresponding one, in the form given by Matthew, in which forgiveness of sin is spoken of as a debt remitted. *For we* (literally, *we ourselves*, sinners as we are) *also forgive*, &c. The duty and practice of forgiveness on our part, is here urged as a reason for the divine forgiveness of sin, not one of merit, but as a sign that we are in a proper state to be forgiven. In this clause the word *sin* is not introduced, but the

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight,

common term to denote the indebtedness of man to man. *Every one*, however great his indebtedness to us. *From evil*. Here as in Matt. 6: 13 (on which see Note), *from the evil*, i. e. from Satan, the prime instigator to evil. The presence and force of the article is not to be overlooked.

5. Having thus given a comprehensive form of prayer, our Lord now pronounces a parable, to enforce the duty of importunate prayer. The argument is *a fortiori* (see N. on Matt. 5: 15). If a selfish man can be prevailed upon to put himself to expense and trouble, by earnest and importunate entreaty, how much more will a righteous and benevolent God confer spiritual blessings on those who perseveringly and earnestly ask them of Him. *Which of you shall have a friend?* i. e. what one of you shall be in the circumstances here supposed? The force of the interrogation continues to v. 8, where the assertion, as to what will be done in the circumstances here mentioned, commences. *At midnight*. This unusual hour is chosen, to give force to the reluctance of the man to rise and supply the wants of his friend, and the power of continual entreaties, to overcome such well-grounded reluctance. There is nothing unnatural in this hour, so far as the traveller is concerned; for in oriental countries the people often travel to a late hour of night, to take advantage of its coolness. *Send me*; literally, *supply or furnish me for use*, the idea is that an equivalent, but not the very thing borrowed, was to be returned. *Three loaves* (see N. on Matt. 14: 17). This number has no other significance than to give naturalness to the parable. Stier says: "Give me three loaves (the

and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him:

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not:

Jews baked flat loaves, probably each was sufficient for one person), for I must offer him one, I must, as is customary, eat one with him, or, at least, break it, and I must also have a third, for the sake of propriety, and in case he should be very hungry."

6. *For a friend of mine.* He urges the requisition upon his own friendly services, as an apology for his coming, at such an unseasonable hour, to beg a favor of his friend. At the same time, his own observance of the laws of friendship, in going forth in the darkness of the night to obtain food for the traveller, could not but incidentally impress upon his friend the duty of responding to the claims of friendship, in like manner, by rising and giving the loaves, as requested to do. Stier well refers to this, but in a somewhat different aspect: "He speaks as if the other must help him, without delay or hesitation, specially because he requests a favor not so much for himself, as for one who is again his friend, and thus appeals to the community of friendship; it is for a common friend, for *my* friends must necessarily be *thine*." *In his journey*; literally, *from his way*, which Bloomfield interprets, *who is just come off a journey*. But the idea is, *in or on a journey*, the form of expression implying a temporary halt from the journey, as when one stops to rest for the night.

7. *He from within* is not precisely the same as *he within*, or *he who was within*, but refers to the fact that he replied from within, and did not open the door, and come forth to converse with his friend. *Trouble me not.* The same word, in the sense of *to disturb or vex*, is employed in Matt. 26:10; Mark 14:6. *The door is now shut*; literally,

the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee?

8 I say unto you, 'Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his

b Ch. 18:1, &c.

*shut up and barred.* This enhances the trouble of opening it, as the fastenings would all have to be removed. *My children*; literally, *my little children*, who would be rendered fretful and troublesome, by being awaked at such an unseasonable hour. *Are with me in bed*; more literally, *have gone with me to bed, and are now there.* We have something like this in our colloquial form of expression, *are to bed*. It is impossible, oftentimes, without circumlocution, to express the shade of sense imparted by the Greek preposition. The general idea is, that his children were all at rest, and would be disturbed, should their father rise, strike a light, open the door, and attend to the wants of his friend. *I cannot rise*, for the reason just given. This passage is not to be so strained, as to imply that the children were in the same bed with their father, but like him were all in bed, and probably in the same room. "A whole family, parents, children, and servants, sleep in the same room, and with slight change of garments, or none at all." Thomson, *Land and Book*, vol. i., p. 180.

8. *Will not rise and give him.* This translation does not quite reach the precise thought of the original, which is literally, *will not give him* (the loaves), *having arisen, because he is his friend*, making the reluctance to consist, not in his unwillingness to give the bread, but in rising and disturbing the whole family. Thus the passage comports with the reason, at first assigned by the man, why he could not grant his friend's request. *Because he is his friend.* A strong emphasis is here laid on *friend*, as though that which was in itself a sufficient reason why this indolent man should have taken the trouble

importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 'And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh

c Mat. 7: 7; & 21: 22; Ma. 11: 24; John 15: 7; Ja. 1: 6; 1 Jo. 3: 22.

to rise and supply the wants of his friend, here totally failed to move him. No considerations of friendship availed to arouse him to action. He would have slumbered on, so far as any influence from this quarter could have been brought to bear upon him. But what friendship could not effect, yielded to the power of importunity. The continued and earnest tone with which the one who stood without pressed his suit, at last prevailed upon the man to arise from his bed, and give him all he needed. Importunity proved a more powerful incentive to action than friendship, a fact which is of no uncommon occurrence in the observation of all. Webster and Wilkinson remark, that "here we have the effect of importunity on the unwilling; in 18: 5, we have its effect on the unjust." The word rendered *importunity*, literally signifies, *shamelessness, impudence*, denoting the urgency with which he pressed his suit, evincing an almost impudent determination to give the man no rest, until he arose and gratified his request. We are not to pervert this illustration of the power of importunity, from its original purpose clearly indicated in the context, by applying it as a rule to be adopted in the intercourse and relations of earthly friendship. Whether the man was right or wrong in thus disturbing the rest of his friend, when perhaps, with far less trouble, he might have provided newly baked cakes for his guest, is not brought at all to view in the narration. An incident of common occurrence, in which the power of importunity is strongly set forth, is chosen for the single purpose of illus-

trating the depth of the divine condescension, in permitting worms of the dust as we are, to importune God for blessings, and with such a promise of success.

11 'If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

d Mat. 7: 9.

trating the depth of the divine condescension, in permitting worms of the dust as we are, to importune God for blessings, and with such a promise of success.

9-13. See Ns. on Matt. 7: 7-11. From this example of the power of importunity, our Lord draws the inference *a fortiori* (see N. on Matt. 5: 15), that if we ask of God, who is so much more benevolent than his creatures, we shall surely receive. The connection shows, however, that the asking here referred to, must be importunate, and hence this is well referred to, as a proof of the duty and efficacy of fervent, importunate prayer. Webster and Wilkinson think that an ascending scale of earnestness is inculcated by the three repetitions of the command in v. 8.

11. *If a son, &c.* The original is not conditional, but expressive of habit: *of what one of you being a father shall a son ask bread*, i. e. when your son shall ask bread of you (as he frequently does), will you give him a stone? In the Greek, the question has the negative form, which implies a negative answer.

12. This verse is added by Luke, as an emphatic enlargement of the idea contained in the preceding verse. The scorpion was a large insect, somewhat like a small lobster, several inches long, and furnished with a venomous sting at the extremity of the tail. *Scorpion* is contrasted here with *egg*, not from any supposed resemblance, by which one could be mistaken for the other, but from the striking difference between their properties. Thomson (vol.



13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

i., p. 379) says, that "old writers speak of a *white* scorpion, and such a one, with the tail folded up, as in specimens of fossil trilobites, would not look unlike a small egg." Trollope quotes Pliny (N. H. XI. 25) as saying, that in Judea, the scorpions are about the size of an egg, and not unlike one in shape. But however this may be, I cannot think that any such resemblance, real or supposed, was the ground of the antithesis here made use of by our Lord. This poisonous insect is often put figuratively for crafty, wicked, and malicious men (see Ezek. 2:6; Luke 10:11). It is employed in 1 Kings 12:11, 14, as the name of a whip, armed with points, as the tail of a scorpion.

13. This verse contains the distinct annunciation of the argument *a fortiori*, which was implied, but not openly expressed in vs. 9, 10. *Know how to give*, i. e. are able and have the disposition to give. *How much more*. This argument has never been used to greater effect than here; if we except that other great instance of its use, in Rom. 5:9, 10; 8:32, where the argument is, that the most difficult part of the work of redemption having been achieved in the death of God's Son, *much more* will it be completed, he having risen to an exalted and glorified state. If God bestowed the greatest of gifts upon us, in giving up his Son to die for man, he will not withhold from us those gifts, which are less expensive and are necessary to give completeness to the work, already at such infinite cost begun. Stier notices, as an increase of the argument in this passage, that *father* is more than *friend* (vs. 5, 6), and yet even an earthly father among us who are evil, is infinitely less than what the great God is willing to be, and really is, to his children. It is not in human language to express the great conde-

14 ¶ And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

• Mat. 9:32; & 12:22.

scension and love of God, in thus acknowledging and acting upon such a parental relation as is here designated. The most yearning love of an earthly father, falls infinitely short of the rich, free, and lavish affection, with which our Heavenly Father dispenses his gifts to vile and ungrateful man, and especially, the spiritual treasures of his love to those who by repentance and faith in Christ apply to Him for salvation and sanctification from the defilement of sin.

14-23. THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES BLASPHEME. *Galilee*. See Ns. on Matt. 12:22-37; Mark 3:22-27. Luke here goes back to relate an incident which occurred while our Lord was yet in Galilee. This is evident from a comparison with Matthew, whose order is here to be followed, inasmuch as he introduces his relation of this cure of the demoniac, by the connective *then*, whereas in Luke there is no mark of connection with the preceding context. There are not wanting some critics of note, who maintain that Luke relates a different incident from Matthew, but a comparison between the two accounts can hardly fail to convince any intelligent and candid reader, that both refer to the same event. Matthew's account is much the fullest, although Luke has expanded the thought in v. 22, much beyond what is found in either Matthew or Mark. Some other slight verbal variations are found, but not such as to require any special note.

14. *It was dumb*, i. e. the demon was the cause of the dumbness of the afflicted person. In Matthew, it was *deaf and dumb*. This twofold deprivation of the sense of hearing and power of speech, is generally found together. Hence the term *deaf mute*, is one of frequent use. *Wondered*. It was doubtless this open expression of their won-

15 But some of them said, 'He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

16 And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven.

17 'But 'he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth.

† Mat. 9: 34; & 12: 24. ‡ Mat. 12: 38; & 16: 1. § Mat. 12: 25; Ma. 3: 24. ¶ John 2: 25.

der, together with the inquiry which they ventured to make in regard to the probable Messiahship of Jesus, which excited the Pharisees to bestir themselves to counteract this favorable opinion of our Lord, which was evidently gaining ground among the common people. As it arose principally from the miraculous power of Jesus, his enemies attempt to throw discredit upon the miracle which he had just performed, by attributing it to Satanic agency, acting in and through Jesus.

15. *Some of them.* They were Pharisees (Matthew), and scribes from Jerusalem (Mark). *Beelzebub.* See N. on Matt. 10: 25; 12: 24.

16. This verse is placed by Dr. Robinson and some of the best harmonists, immediately preceding v. 29. There is evidently a transposition of it from its proper connection, as vs. 15 and 17 are closely connected in sense. The parallel passage is Matt. 12: 38, on which see Note. Luke adds *from heaven*, which shows that it was a sign of his Messiahship, which they demanded of him. This establishes the claim of this verse to the general connection here given it.

17. *Knowing their thoughts*, by his omniscience. *A house divided against a house.* The word *divided* is rightly supplied from the preceding context, although Campbell adopts the rendering, *one family is falling after another*, a sense obscure and ill suited to the

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I <sup>†</sup>with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

‡ Ex. 8: 19.

context, as well as to the parallel passage in Matthew and Mark, where the word *divided* is expressed in the text.

18. *Because ye say.* These words imply an ellipsis, which may be thus supplied: I put this question, in order to show the absurdity of supposing Satan to be thus arrayed against himself, *because ye say* (in your thoughts and to one another) *that I cast out, &c.*

19. See N. on Matt. 12: 27.

20. *With the finger of God.* In Matthew: *By the Spirit of God.* Both forms of expression denote the exertion of the divine power. *No doubt.* This is an erroneous translation of a Greek participle, which simply signifies *then*, and serves as a close connection. Here it shows that the near approach of the kingdom of God, was a certain sequence of the fact which could not but be admitted, that Jesus cast out devils by the divine power. The hypothetical form, *if I with the finger*, does not imply doubt or contingency, but the logical condition, on which the result stated in the next clause depends. *Is come upon you*; literally, *has come upon you before you expected it.* While they were looking for it far in the future, and its approach to be heralded by the signs and wonders, with which they had invested the advent of the Messiah, the kingdom of God had already come, and the foundations of its future glory and prosperity were now being laid. See N. on Matt. 12: 48.

21 'When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

22 But "when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

24 "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest;

*1 Mat. 12: 29; Ma. 9: 27. m Isa. 53: 12; Col. 2: 15. n Mat. 12: 30. o Mat. 12: 43.*

21. *A strong man*; literally, *the strong man*. The article in the original does not of itself refer this to Satan, the mighty foe of God and man, although reference is doubtless had to him. But it communicates this shade of sense: *when he who is the strong man, being fully armed, keepeth* (or guardeth). The idea of military vigilance is implied in the verb *keepeth*. We have therefore three qualities brought to view, strength, completeness of the means of defence, and watchfulness. These against an inferior foe, would furnish ample protection. *Are in peace*, i. e. are safe.

22. *A stronger*; literally, *the stronger*, i. e. he who is stronger, whoever he may be. See the preceding Note. This superiority in strength is denoted in Matthew by the words, "except he first bind the strong man," which implies power to do thus. *Shall come upon him* to do him injury. *And overcome him, &c.* It is assumed that victory rests with him, inasmuch as he is the stronger and more powerful. *All his armor*. As there is an armor or panoply of God (Eph. 6: 11, 20), so there is a *panoply of evil*, of which, when Satan, who is here referred to figuratively by a *strong man armed*, is deprived, his power is broken up, and his ability to do mischief restricted. Hence it is here referred to, as the armor *wherein*

and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and "the last state of that man is worse than the first.

27 And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her  
*p John 5: 14; He. 6: 4; & 10: 26; 2 Pa. 2: 20.*

*he trusted*, as his principal means of defence, as well as of aggression upon the kingdom of truth and righteousness. There is here presented in epitome, the great and victorious struggle of truth with error. The strong man armed, for a time triumphed in his deeds of violence. He seemed to all invincible. But a stronger came, and he was vanquished, and despoiled of his armor. All his ill-gotten booty was divided among the followers of the mighty conqueror. Thus shall the Great Captain of our salvation triumph over his enemies, and put all things under his feet. 1 Cor. 15: 25; Rev. 19: 11-21.

23. This verse agrees verbatim with Matt. 12: 30, and is doubtless a short, pithy, proverbial saying, oftentimes repeated by our Lord.

24-36. THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES SEEK A SIGN. *Galilee*. See Ns. on Matt. 12: 38-45. There is a close verbal resemblance between Luke and Matthew, with variety enough however to establish the claims of both to be independent writers, as far as their respective narratives are concerned.

24-26. These verses are placed by Dr. Robinson after v. 36. They agree verbally with Matt. 12: 43-45, on which see Notes.

27, 28. This incident is peculiar to Luke. A certain woman of the com-

voice, and said unto him, 'Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

28 But he said, Yea, 'rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

g Ch. 1 : 28, 48. r Mat. 7 : 21 ; ch. 8 : 21 ;  
Ja. 1 : 25.

pany, hearing the discourse of Jesus, and filled with irrepressible ardor and admiration, ejaculates a blessing on the happy mother of so wonderful a person. The scene is truly oriental, it being the custom in those countries, even now, to implore blessings or imprecate curses upon the heads of the parents of friends or enemies. The words of this woman are to be attributed rather to wonder and astonishment, at the sayings and doings of our Lord, than to a spiritual perception of the true excellence and glory of his character and mission. Hence in his reply, he administers a gentle rebuke for her admiration of his words and miracles, unless accompanied by a lively and productive faith in the truth of God. At the same time his *yea rather*, or as it may be more literally rendered, *yea indeed*, confirms the truth of what she had expressed in regard to his mother, although in itself of secondary importance to the blessedness of those, who hear and obey God's word. What a trenchant blow is here struck against the folly and sin of deifying the mother of Jesus for an honor, which our Lord himself places below that which is conferred upon every believer, in the spiritual relation which he sustains to God, as an obedient and devoted follower. Mary herself was pronounced *blessed* (1 : 45), in that she believed the things which were told her of the Lord. See also Matt. 12 : 49, 50, where our Saviour declares that true believers are his nearest and dearest relatives. Mary's relation to him as his mother, was therefore neither so intimate nor so truly honorable, as her living union with him as her Saviour and Redeemer. *Lifted up her voice*. She spake aloud in tones of exulting admiration. *But he said*. The

29 ¶ 'And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation : they seek a sign ; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

30 For as 'Jonas was a sign  
s Mat. 12 : 38, 39. t John 1 : 17 ; & 2 : 10.

pronoun is emphatic, and opposes strongly his words to those previously spoken by the woman. *Yea rather*. The corrective character of these words has been alluded to. While our Lord admits the truth of the woman's asseveration, he refers to a state or condition of blessedness enjoyed by the believer, compared with which, the previously expressed cause of gratulation dwindles into insignificance. *Word of God*. Alford notices the humility of Jesus, in not saying *my word*, but the *word of God*. Our Lord frequently turns the attention of his auditors from himself to the Father who sent him, not however intending to intimate thereby, that they were other than one and indivisible, but only that in the work of redemption, the Son is subordinate to the Father, and as such, makes it his supreme delight to honor and obey Him.

29. *When the people were gathered thick together* ; more literally, *the people gathering to him in crowds*. His discourse with the Pharisees was characterized by such vehement earnestness and boldness, that the people flocked to him from every quarter, and pressed upon him, wishing to catch the words which fell from his lips, and perhaps with the expectation of seeing some wonderful sign on his part, in answer to the demand of the scribes and Pharisees (see v. 16 ; Matt. 12 : 38). *This is an evil generation*. See N. on Matt. 12 : 39, where the pronoun is wanting, the expression being rendered definite by the connection.

30. *As Jonas was a sign, &c.* In preaching to the Ninevites, Jonah doubtless made known to them the divine judgment, which followed his disobedience, and his wonderful deliver-

87 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him; and he went in, and sat down to meat.

38 And 'when the Pharisee

c Ma. 7: 2.

illumination of reason and natural conscience, is referred to in the first clause by *whole body*, the imagery being conformed to the natural eye, with which the comparison started in v. 34. In the second clause, the word *body* is omitted, indicating a transition to the spiritual man, enlightened by the rays of truth, which without any obstruction shine in and through his whole moral being. The verse embodies a most significant and important truth, to which we should give heed, not only in keeping our own spiritual vision unobstructed and clear, but in our efforts to bring others to the truth; and especially in training the young and guarding them against those errors and habits, which tend to darken and disease the understanding and stupefy the conscience.

37-64. JESUS DENOUNCES WOES AGAINST THE PHARISEES. *Galilee*. The coincidence between this discourse and the one related by Matthew (chap. 23), is to be referred to what I have several times had occasion to notice, in these comments on Luke, that our Lord often repeated weighty and important truths, in order to give them emphasis and effect, or to illustrate and enforce thereby other important truths. On this occasion, as he sat at the Pharisee's table, and noticed his superstitious observance of outward ablutions, he uttered some of those terrible woes, which afterwards, on his final departure from the temple, he expanded to greater length.

37. *As he spake*; literally, *when he had spoken*. The verb, translated in our common version, to *dine*, signifies a morning repast or lunch. It probably refers here to a repast taken at noontide. *He went in*; literally, *having entered*, i. e. immediately on entering. The form of expression conforms to the fact, that he occupied no time in

saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

39 'And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and

d Mat. 23: 25.

ablutions, between his entering the house and reclining at the table. *Sat down*. See N. on Matt. 9: 10.

38. *When the Pharisee saw it*. The pronoun *it*, looks forward for its explanation to the next clause. The natural order would have been: 'When the Pharisee saw that he had not first washed before dinner, he marvelled.' The arrangement, as it stands in the text, seems to have been adopted to give emphasis to the verb *marvelled*. As it regards the thing here complained of, while the mode of eating with the fingers, rendered the washing of the hands before meals common and oftentimes necessary, yet the practice was sometimes dispensed with. Some very absurdly take the word *washed* (literally, *baptized*), in the sense of an ablution of the whole body. But a reference to the original in Mark 7: 2-4, will show that the words commonly translated to *wash* and to *baptize*, are there used interchangeably in the sense of the former.

39. *And the Lord said, &c.* The Pharisee had probably given utterance to his amazement, at our Lord's omission of what he esteemed of such importance. This is not necessarily to be supposed, however, for Jesus knew well what was passing through his mind, and needed not its audible expression. *Now* does not here relate to time, but is a connective imparting vivacity and emphasis to the words, which it serves to introduce. Alford gives it this turn: *here is an instance where ye Pharisees, &c.* This gives too much importance to the connective, although the sense is good. *Ye Pharisees*. Reference is had to the class of Pharisees, to which his host belonged; or perhaps other Pharisees sat at the table, and united in expressions of surprise, at the omission of the ceremony

the platter; but 'your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40 *Ye fools, did not he, that*

c Tit. 1: 15.

of ablation on the part of our Lord. *Make clean, &c.* See N. on Matt. 23: 25, where a woe is pronounced upon them, for their hypocritical regard for external cleanliness. *Outside of the cup and the platter* is put for their *external* appearance. As a good and neat housewife takes pride in the cleanliness of all the dishes, on which food is served up, so these Pharisees were careful, that nothing should be seen in their external deportment, which would indicate, that they were other than the most holy men. See N. on 16: 15. *Your inward part*, i. e. your heart. The figure, which began with the *outside of the cup and platter*, is here dropped, and the heart or internal moral state, is substituted for what, if the metaphor had been continued, would have been the *inside of the cup*. In Matthew, the word *within*, is rendered definite, by the expression *extortion and excess*, which must of course refer to the mind or heart. This clearly shows, that the *outside of the cup* is used of the body, and the *inner portion*, of the heart or soul of man. *Is filled*; literally, *loaded*, as a vessel is laden with a full cargo, a sense to which the verb is commonly applied. *Ravening* is the same word rendered in Matthew, *extortion*. The word rendered *wickedness*, is a general term for *excess*, found in the parallel passage in Matthew.

40. This verse is interpreted in Matt. 23: 26, where internal purity is shown to be of far more value, than any external show of piety. The same idea is here expressed in the form of a question, the sense of which is, that God has made the soul with all its powers and properties, as well as the external man, and that he requires truth and purity of heart no less than external cleanliness. Indeed there is here a suppressed argument *a fortiori*. If it is of importance to preserve outward

made. that which is without, make that which is within also?

41 'But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, be-

d Is. 58: 7; Da. 4: 27; ch. 12: 33.

cleanliness, how much more important to cleanse the heart of all its moral impurities, especially as the same holy and righteous God who formed the body, created also the mind with its immortal properties, to be fitted for the pure and exalted services of heaven. The cleansing of a part only, and that too of inferior importance, is good for nothing, unless it be extended to the whole moral man. This argument of our Lord receives its force and pertinency from the religious virtue, which the Pharisees attached to external ablutions. Jesus did not acknowledge any such virtue, in the mere washing of hands, but by this species of argument, he convicted the Pharisee, on his own ground, of great inconsistency in attaching superior importance to the washing of the body, over the purification of the heart and conscience.

41. *But rather give, &c.* Three senses are given to this passage. The first is that our Lord spoke this ironically: 'But ye give alms of your substance, and then say that all things are clean unto you, i. e. a little almsgiving is deemed by you a sufficient atonement for your enormous extortions, and unjust gains.' This sense is inadmissible, mainly from the fact; that it would require a different construction of the original, which, as it now stands, should be translated, *give then the things within* (i. e. the contents of the cup and platter) *in alms*. As the Pharisees never gave the *things within*, but sparingly of the things within, this latter form should have been the construction, had the ironical sense been intended. Besides, as Alford remarks, it would not only be inconsistent with the imperative form of the verb, but "would be altogether irrelevant to the matter in hand, which was reproof to the Pharisees, for their care about out-

hold, all things are clean unto you.

42 'But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue

• Mat. 23 : 23.

ward cleanliness, when the *inside* was left unclean. It would also be inconsistent with the emphatic position, in the original, of the words *things as ye have*, which are pointed to, as the true material, out of which to give alms. It would be contrary also to our Lord's usual habit of speaking about giving alms, to make him cast a slur on that virtue, as this would do. See Mark 10 : 21 ; Luke 12 : 33, where the expression is very similar to this." A second interpretation is, *give according to the things which ye have*. But this also would require a different construction in the original, and serves to add nothing to the force of the passage, which is evidently intended to be weighty and emphatic. I have no hesitation therefore in adopting, as the true interpretation, the sense which lies on the face of the passage, and which comports with the parallel passage in Matt. 23 : 23, *give freely in alms the things within* (i. e. consecrate your entire being to the duty of benevolence), instead of practising, as you now do, all sorts of extortion and excess. Then you will take an important step towards cleansing "that which is within the cup and platter" (Matthew), and rendering the outside clean also. This interpretation rejects the usual sense *your possessions*—which our translators, with no license whatever from the original, have rendered of *such things as ye have*—and adopts the more natural and consistent one, *the things within* (see Matt. 9 : 13 ; 12 : 7), corresponding to *your inward part* (i. e. your heart, the seat of the passions, emotions, and affections), in v. 39. The argument of our Lord, which is here exceedingly condensed and emphatic, is that the first step towards cleansing their inward pollution, which was so vastly more odious to a holy God, than mere outward uncleanness,

and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

was the duty of almsgiving, or deeds of charity, and mercy. We are not to press our Lord's words to imply, that they were to give away all their possessions. The contents of the platter, denoted here by the things within, and opposed to the mere furbish and glitter of the outside, represent the daily allowance, which one's means will enable him to offer to the service of benevolence, as his food is each day provided, by a requisite appropriation for table expenses. The contents of the spiritual platter, in the way of acts of mercy and benevolence, are to be served up each day (to employ the metaphor here used), with as much care, assiduity, and undeviating regularity, as those of the platter, on which is placed our daily food. The general principle of almsgiving here laid down, is of course to be subject to such modifications and restrictions in its application, as the circumstances in any given instance require. This is more fully brought to view in my Note on Matt. 5 : 42. *All things are clean unto you*. You need not fear pollution from contact with any external object, for purity of heart renders the whole man proof against external defilement. The same idea is expressed in Phil. 1 : 15, "unto the pure, all things are pure, but unto them which are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience are defiled."

42. The conduct of the Pharisees is declared by our Lord, to be the very opposite of that enjoined in the preceding verse. They were ready to pay into the sacred treasury, tithes of the most common and valueless herbs, but they *passed over justice or the love of God*. They utterly disregarded the great principles of justice, and the duties of benevolence growing out of love to God. *But* introduces a strong antithesis to the preceding sentiment.

43 'Woe unto you Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

44 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! <sup>a</sup> for ye are as graves which appear not, and

*f* Mat. 23: 6; *Ma* 12: 38, 39.  
*g* Mat. 23: 27. *h* Ps. 5: 9.

*For ye tithe, &c.* See N. on Matt. 23: 23. *Pass over*, i. e. do not enforce, or pay regard to. *To leave the other undone*; literally, *to have given up those*, as things of no importance, and with which you have no connection. On the further verbal interpretation of this verse, see N. on Matt. 23: 23.

43. See Ns. on Matt. 23: 6, 7. Compare also 14: 7. Alford suggests, that there was doubtless ample illustration of this, at the time and place when it was spoken. Webster and Wilkinson refer what is said here, to the privilege and distinction of occupying the first seats; while in 20: 46, the first seats themselves are more precisely denoted.

44. Matt. 23: 27 is parallel to this verse, but the point of comparison is somewhat dissimilar. There the contrast is drawn between the external appearance of these sepulchres, painted so as to appear clean and white, and the putridity and loathsome corruption within. Here in Luke, the graves are represented as hidden from the eye, and men pass over them unawares and are defiled. The Jews were careful not to approach too near a sepulchre or tomb, lest by actual contact with it, they should be defiled. See Numb. 19: 16. In order to avoid this, they kept the tombs externally so white and imposing, that whoever passed by might discern them even from afar, and not risk their purity by approaching too near. This imparts great force to our Lord's comparison of these Pharisees to hidden graves, polluting all who approached them, under mistaken ideas of their superior sanctity. *Which appear not* refers to such graves, as have in process of time become sunken, or

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the men that walk over *them* are not aware of *them*.

45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Woe unto you also, *ye lawyers*! <sup>i</sup> for ye lade men

*i* Mat. 23: 4.

so dilapidated, as to be reduced to a level with the earth. These being overgrown with grass, weeds, or bushes, would be undetected by the passer-by. *The men that walk over them*. Alford rejects the article in the original; and translates: *men when they walk over them*. He does this, however, without sufficient grounds of departure from the common reading. *Are not aware* that they are walking over them.

45. *One of the lawyers* or doctors of the law. He was probably a Pharisee, although the office did not necessarily imply this. *Thus saying, or in saying these things*. He seems to have been nettled at the union of his class with the Pharisees in the last woe. If he also belonged to the sect of the Pharisees, as is probable, he could not but have taken offence at all the preceding woes.

46. The woe here pronounced upon the lawyers, is connected by *also*, with those previously denounced against the Pharisees. The original is highly intensive: *And to you, ye lawyers, woe!* If this lawyer supposed that his high station, as a doctor of the law, would so overawe Jesus, as to extort from him an apology for any semblance of reproach, which he might have given them, he was quickly undeceived by this woe, which was immediately and openly pronounced against him and his class. He was dealing with one who hesitated not to rebuke wickedness and hypocrisy, wherever he found it, whether among the high or the low, those in public or private station. The word here translated *lawyers*, is different from that rendered *scribes*, in v. 44. It refers probably to *teaching* scribes, or those whose



with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

47 <sup>a</sup> Woe unto you! for ye

<sup>b</sup> Mat. 23: 29.

sole office it was to expound the law. Yet these doctors of the law must have been included in the more general term *scribes*, or the lawyer would not have taken umbrage, at what Jesus said of the scribes in v. 44. In the parallel verse in Matthew (23: 4), our Lord warns his disciples against the scribes, who imposed upon the consciences of others such grievous burdens, of which they themselves were wholly unmindful. The word rendered *burdens*, is used primarily of the lading of ships, and in the present connection signifies, therefore, burdens of such size and weight, as ought never to have been put on men's shoulders. This was particularly chargeable upon the scribes, who were the constituted expounders of the law, and exacted or remitted its duties, at their pleasure. *Grievous*, i. e. difficult. The expression *one of your fingers*, stands opposed to the *body* of the persons upon whom these heavy burdens were placed. In Matthew, the words, *lay them on men's shoulders*, renders the antithesis open and striking. Stripped of the metaphor, the idea is that the religious duties, imposed upon the people by these doctors of the law, were most burdensome and oppressive; but so far as they themselves were concerned, they paid little or no regard to those duties, or manifested the least sympathy for those upon whom they had imposed such heavy burdens.

47. For the general explanation, see *Ns.* on Matt. 23: 29-32, where the woe is more fully expanded. The words *and your fathers killed them*, are implied in v. 30, in Matthew. It is added as a heightening circumstance to their hypocrisy, that they paid such pretended respect and veneration to the memory of the ancient prophets, as to build them the most costly sepulchres, even though by thus doing they censured

build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

their ancestors who had put these prophets to death.

48. The word rendered *truly*, is a particle denoting that this verse is an inference from the assertion contained in the preceding one. *Therefore* would have been the proper rendering. *That ye allow*, i. e. approve, assent to. How did their construction of these sepulchres show this? Various answers may be given to this question. In general it may be said, that their hypocrisy, evinced by the profound respect which they pretended to pay these prophets, whose pure and blameless life they were so far from imitating, was an evidence of their hearty sympathy with the murderous deeds of their ancestors. This hypocritical respect for men, whose lives and doctrines were so diverse from theirs, aggravated their sin, and even rendered them more guilty than the murderers themselves, since to the murderous disposition, which they possessed in common with their fathers, they had superadded the great and odious sin of hypocrisy. This explains the latter part of this verse, *for they indeed killed them and ye build their sepulchres*, which, on its face, is somewhat obscure, especially its logical connection with the preceding clause, as a reason or proof of their approval of the deeds of their fathers. Thomson (*Land & Book*, vol. ii., p. 493) refers this to their idolatrous and sacrilegious reverence for those tombs of the prophets, a superstition which is now prevalent in all oriental countries. "Every village has its saints' tombs—every hill is crowned with the white dome of some prophet. Thither all resort to garnish the sepulchres, burn incense and consecrated candles, fulfil vows, make offerings, and pray. So fanatical are they in their zeal, that they would tear any man to pieces who should put dishonor upon these sacred shrines. It

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute:

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

*1 Mat. 23 : 34.*

was for rebuking this and other kinds of idolatry that 'the fathers killed the prophets,' and those who built their tombs would in like manner, kill any one who condemned *their* idolatrous reverence for these very sepulchres. Thus the Pharisees, by the very act of building these tombs of the prophets, and honoring them as they did, showed plainly that they were actuated by the same spirit that led their fathers to kill them; and to make this matter self-evident, they very soon proceeded to crucify the Lord of the prophets because of his faithful rebukes." This is good as far as it goes, but there was undoubtedly a deeper significance in our Lord's rebuke, than the idolatrous reverence they manifested for these tombs of the prophets. The parallel passage in Matthew, "that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets," is expressive of the same sentiment of approbation of the deeds of their fathers, which ~~taken~~ in connection with this external reverence for the tombs of those whom their fathers slew, convicts them of the most downright hypocrisy. *Ye bear witness*, i. e. your lives show, one instance being cited in their hypocritical regard for the tombs of the prophets.

49-51. Therefore. The illative force of the original is strong and emphatic, *on account of this*, i. e. what has just been affirmed. *The wisdom of God*. That this is equivalent to the *I* (i. e. the Lord Jesus Christ) of the parallel passage in Matthew, there can be no doubt. But that *wisdom* here means the Logos or Eternal Word, an opinion entertained by some expositors, is very questionable. I would rather take it in the sense of the

51 "From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

52 "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of

*m* Ge. 4: 8. *n* 2 Ch. 24: 20, 21.  
*o* Mat. 23: 13.

*all-wise God*, whom Jesus, by the employment of the first person in Matthew, declares himself unequivocally to be. The expression may find its parallel in the Old Testament phrase, *the word of the Lord* a circumlocution for *Jehovah*, or what in other connections is expressed by *thus saith the Lord*. The difficulty of the passage, as Alford remarks, is not so much in the meaning of this phrase, as in finding where in the Old Testament, the *wisdom of God* has spoken the words here quoted. This excellent critic refers the whole saying to 2 Chron. 24: 18-22, enlarging the historical incident, which merely developed one thread, so to speak, of God's purpose, into the divine revelation of the whole purpose of God, as the counsel of his will in heaven. This is undoubtedly true, but it would be still better to refer the declaration of our Lord to the purpose of God, rendered obvious by the whole tenor of scripture, to continue to send his messengers, until the measure of the nation's sin was filled, and their doom irreversibly sealed. For the verbal explanation of vs. 49-51, see Ns. on Matthew 23: 34-36. What in Matthew is designated *righteous blood* is varied in Luke by *blood of all the prophets*; and *upon you may come in Matthew*, is expressed by *may be required of this generation* in Luke, the former referring to the execution of judgment, the latter, to the judicial requirement of punishment for the unlawful shedding of blood. *Prophets and apostles*, see Eph. 2: 20.

52. See N. on Matt. 23: 13, where the words *have taken away the key of knowledge*, are incidentally explained.

knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him

Alford refers this, not to the key admitting to knowledge, but the *knowledge-key* to the right understanding of the law and the prophets, which show Him to the people, of whom they testified. The common interpretation, which refers it to the key of knowledge, which the Pharisees and lawyers, after locking the door, had retained in their possession, is the true one. Dr. Jahn says, that the allusion is to the presentation of a key to the candidate for the title of Rabbi, on his graduation from the seminary, symbolical of his capacity now to open the treasury of knowledge to others. This key they had virtually taken from the people, by their false interpretations of the divine oracles, and withholding from them the simple truth. In the parallel passage in Matthew (23: 13), they are directly charged with shutting up the kingdom of God against men. This serves to illustrate the more figurative language employed by Luke.

53. *To urge him vehemently.* Some render, *to be very angry.* The verb literally signifies *to have or hold within*, and is used to denote the disposition, favorable or unfavorable, which one entertains towards another. Doddridge renders it *fiercely to fasten upon him.* Olshausen translates: *to lie in wait, or lay snares for him.* The following verb, *to provoke him to speak* (literally *to draw out of the mouth* by artful and provoking questions), would lead me to prefer the translation *to press upon him* with ensnaring questions. Both verbs would then refer to the same general act, the latter denoting the object or purpose for which they fastened upon him, and serving therefore to explain the former. The verb translated *to provoke him to speak*, is rendered variously by commentators. Its literal signification is *to speak from the lips*, i. e. from memory, in opposition to speaking from a manuscript;

vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:

54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

p Ma. 12: 12.

hence, *to dictate*, and *to answer*, and *make to answer off-hand*, which is its meaning here. They plied him with questions, hoping in his off-hand answers, to find some ground of accusation against him, either before the Roman or Jewish tribunal.

54. *Laying wait for him.* A military term signifying *to lie in ambush, to form an ambuscade*; hence *to lay snares* as for an animal, *to seek to circumvent.* Both this verb and those in v. 53, indicate the same general idea of malignancy and craftiness, in seeking opportunity to effect his ruin by pressing him with insidious questions. There is hardly an instance to be found, where this deep-seated and diabolical hostility appears in blacker color, than on this occasion. The vileness of their conduct is enhanced by the fact, that their efforts to effect his ruin were put forth while he sat at the table of one of their number, who, we can hardly doubt, invited him with hostile and crafty intent, and who was among the foremost to find wherewith to accuse him. While reading this fierce and malignant assault which they made upon him, we cannot but recur to Heb. 12: 3; 1 Pet. 2: 23, which seem to have been penned, in view of just such scenes as this, through which Jesus had to pass. *To catch* conforms to the metaphor contained in the preceding word, *laying wait for.* Its literal signification is *to hunt wild beasts, to chase, pursue, catch beasts of prey*; hence, *to hunt down and capture men.* The word is often found in the Old Testament, in the sense of hunting after the innocent. See 1 Sam. 24: 11; 26: 20; Lam. 4: 18; Ezek. 18: 18; Mic. 7: 2. Here these wicked men laid snares for our blessed Lord, as though he were a vile wretch, to rid the country of whom would be the most praiseworthy achievement. *Might accuse him*, either to the

## CHAPTER XII.

**I**N the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto

*a* Mat. 16 : 6; *Ma.* 8 : 15.

civil authorities as a seditious person, or to the people, as one who was a transgressor of the Mosaic law.

## CHAPTER XII.

1-59. JESUS DISCOURSES WITH THE DISCIPLES AND THE MULTITUDE. *Galilee.* Many of the sayings here joined in a connected discourse by Luke, are related by Matthew as spoken on other occasions. These will be noted in their appropriate place.

1. *In the mean time*, i. e. while our Lord was reclining at the table of the Pharisee. *Were gathered together* at the door of the house. It would seem that they crowded forward, either to get a sight of him, or what is more likely, to hear something of the conversation which was going on within. Stier suggests, among other reasons for this great gathering, that their intention may have been, to protect him from the excited and wrathful scribes and Pharisees. It was evidently a time of much excitement. *An innumerable multitude*; literally, *myriads*, which is frequently put for an indefinitely large number. *So that they trode (were likely to trample.* Webster and Wilkinson) *one upon another*, in their attempts to see and hear him. Large numbers had doubtless been in attendance, when he discoursed with the Pharisees on the sin of blasphemy (11 : 14-26), and their hypocrisy in demanding a sign (11 : 29-35). These numbers were still further enlarged, while he sat at meat with the Pharisees; and now as he came forth, the vast multitude pressed forward, with such eagerness to obtain a favorable position to see and hear him, as to well-nigh trample one another down; for with Stier, I regard this as a strong expression for crowding closely upon one another, and not intimat-

his disciples first of all, <sup>b</sup> Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 <sup>c</sup> For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed;

*b* Mat. 16 : 12. *c* Mat. 10 : 26; *Ma.* 4 : 22; ch. 8 : 17.

ing that they actually trode one upon another. The scene was such, however, as to be almost a literal fulfilment of our Lord's declaration in Matt. 11 : 12. *He began to say*, &c. He first addressed himself to his disciples, although doubtless so as to be heard by others, warning them against the *leaven* of the Pharisees, which he declares to be *hypocrisy*. This was their great sin, the leaven of which permeated and converted to its own vile and odious nature, their hearts, lives, and conduct. Alford says that hypocrisy was singled out, as the vice most dangerous to the disciples. However this may be, it was the leading sin of the Pharisees, and one for which they were most solemnly rebuked by our Lord. Stier says that this discourse has much of the condemnatory spirit of the preceding discourse, with which it is immediately related. Certain it is, that our Saviour showed that he feared not to rebuke these hypocritical and malignant enemies of truth, in public as well as in private, and to solemnly warn his disciples against imbibing their spirit or imitating their example. *First of all* to the disciples and afterward to the multitude, v. 13. Stier takes these words with *beware*, in the sense of *first of all take heed*.

2-9. See Ns. on Matt. 10 : 26-33, where these words are found with slight verbal variations. They are introduced there as a reason why the disciples had no cause to fear their enemies. Here in Luke, they stand as the reason why special heed should be taken against falling into this leading vice of the Pharisees. Any hypocritical veil which they might throw over their real character, would be useless, for every secret thing was to be brought to light (vs. 2, 3), and their hypocrisy

neither hid, that shall not be known.

3 Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.

4 'And I say unto you 'my  
*d Mat 10: 28; Ia. 51: 7, 8, 12, 18; Je. 1: 8.*  
*e John 15: 14, 15.*

would be unmasked. They had no reason to practice concealment, through fear of men, for they were in the divine keeping (vs. 4-7). They who confessed him before men, should have a corresponding reward (v. 8), but those who denied him or blasphemed the Holy Ghost (working in the Incarnate Son of God, see N. on Matt. 12: 31), committed a sin, for which there was no forgiveness (vs. 9, 10). This full and open profession of Christ, they would be assisted to make in the hour of peril (v. 12). Such I conceive to be the logical connection of these verses with the injunction in v. 1. What follows, after the interruption in vs. 13-21, must be regarded as fragmentary, and not made up of one continuous discourse.

3. *Shall be proclaimed, &c.* The connection most naturally refers this to such things as the veil of hypocrisy might be intended to conceal, but which, in due time, would be stripped of their mask, and stand revealed to public gaze, nay, would be trumpeted abroad, as if they were proclaimed upon the house top. This has been usually referred to the open, free, and unrestrained conversation which is enjoyed among friends, on the flat roofs of eastern houses, at the cool of the day, and which would give publicity to any thing which might be the theme of conversation. But Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i., p. 51) thinks that it may be fairly inferred from the present custom, that our Lord referred to public proclamations from the tops of houses. "At the present day," says he, "local

friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

governors in country districts cause their commands to be thus published. Their proclamations are generally made in the evening, after the people have returned from their labors in the field. The public crier ascends the highest roof at hand, and lifts up his voice in a long-drawn call upon all faithful subjects to give ear and obey. He then proceeds to announce, in a set form, the will of their master, and demands obedience thereto."

5, 6. *After he hath killed is taken by Bengel as an impersonal, after death has been inflicted. Hath power, i. e. authority. Yea, I say unto you, &c.* An emphatic repetition of the preceding sentiment. *Are not five sparrows, &c.* In Matthew, *are not two sparrows sold for a farthing.* The decrease of value in Luke is founded on the natural and universal law of trade, that the price of an article is reduced according to the number taken. Hence in Matthew two are sold for one farthing; in Luke, five for two farthings. The design, in both instances, is to show of how little value were these small birds, yet not one of which was forgotten before God, i. e. each one was the object of his unceasing care and protection. Thomson after speaking of the habits of this little bird, says, "when we see their countless numbers, and the eagerness with which they are destroyed as a worthless nuisance, we can better appreciate the assurance that our Heavenly Father, who takes care of them, so that not one can fall to the ground without his notice, will surely take care of us, who are of more value than

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

8 <sup>9</sup> Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:

9 But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God.

10 And <sup>10</sup> whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man,

<sup>9</sup> Mat. 10: 32; Ma. 8: 38; 2 Ti. 2: 12; 1 Jo. 2: 23. <sup>10</sup> Mat. 12: 31, 32; Ma. 8: 28; 1 Jo. 5: 16.

many sparrows." Land and Book, vol. i., p. 54.

8-11. *Before the angels of God.* In Matthew (10: 32), "before my Father which is in heaven." The one form of expression includes the other. *Whosoever shall speak, &c.* The sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost here referred to, has been so fully discussed in my Note on Matt. 12: 31, 32, that the reader is referred to what is there said of this awful, unpardonable sin. In v. 11, *powers* is a generic term, denoting all who are in authority.

13. The interruption of our Lord's discourse, here related, is one of the strangest occurrences in the gospels. That a man should obtrude his private and secular affairs upon the notice of a religious teacher, while in the midst of a most solemn address, referring to the everlasting interests of the soul, and uttered in the hearing of thousands, can only be accounted for, in the dominant influence of the love of gain, which absorbs or expels from the soul every noble and generous impulse. While our Lord was holding sweet and heavenly discourse on these momentous themes, this foolish and selfish man was thinking only how he could secure a division of the inheritance left him by his father, and which it seems was retained in the possession of his brother. There

it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

11 <sup>11</sup> And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

13 <sup>12</sup> ¶ And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

<sup>12</sup> A Mat. 10: 19; Ma. 13: 11; ch. 21: 14.

was nothing wrong in this request, when considered apart from the circumstances in which it was made. It was right that the paternal inheritance should be equitably divided. No blame could have been attached to this man, if, after the failure of all other means of obtaining redress, he had claimed the vindication of his rights, which the law of the land afforded. But the referral of such a matter to Jesus, and at so unseasonable a time, showed that the man had totally failed to discern the spiritual mission of our Lord, and supposed that he had come to adjust differences, and set all things right in the social and political, as well as religious world. His error then consisted in such an entire devotion to earthly good, that the spiritual truths, to which Jesus had been giving utterance, fell unheeded, if not unheard, upon his ear. Hence unmindful of the deference due to so eminent a Teacher, or the presence of the thousands who were hanging upon his words, he rudely interrupts the discourse with a matter of private and trivial interest. *Speak to my brother.* Probably his brother was standing by at this time, and this may have suggested the untimely request. *That he divide with me the inheritance* (i. e. patrimonial estate) is the order in which the words stand in the origi-

14 And he said unto him, 'Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you ?

† John 18 : 36.

nal. The word *divide* here signifies to *share*. In respect to the division of property among brethren, the eldest had two shares (Deut. 21 : 17), while the rest of the children had equal portions. Some without reason think that this was a younger brother, who wished to share equally with the elder brother.

14. *Man*. The word in the original has a shade of disrespect, there being another word for *man*, as a term of respect. There is also a strong antithesis between this and the friendly address in v. 4. If he was included among the persons there addressed as the friends of Jesus, his ill-timed and selfish request separated him from the number, and reduced his claims upon the consideration of our Lord to such only, as resulted from his belonging to mankind at large. *Who made me, &c.* Who constituted me a civil ruler, to judge or arbitrate between men, in regard to worldly matters of dispute? This is not my office. I was not sent into the world on such a mission. According to some critics, the difference between *judge* and *divider*, is that the former was a public judge, the latter, a private arbiter or referee. But it is perhaps better to regard the latter, as explanatory of the former, in the sense of a *judge* or *umpire* to settle disputes. Expositors refer this reply of our Lord, to Ex. 2 : 14, where, as Alford remarks, is shown the essential difference of the two offices of Moses and Christ. *Over you*. The plural refers to the generic sense in which *man* is to be taken. *You*, mankind, men in general. I agree with Stier, that if a dispute in relation to the settlement of their worldly affairs had arisen between Peter and John, or any of the apostles, our Lord would have interposed with his advice and authority. They were members of his own family, and belonged not to the world without. They had put themselves under his special guidance and

15 And he said unto them, 'Take heed, and beware of covetousness : for a man's life consist-

† 1 TL 6 : 7, &c.

direction. But the class of which this man was the exponent, were yet outside hearers, and belonged to Jesus neither by spiritual affinity nor external profession. Keeping in sight this distinction between the relations of the church and the world to Christ, we see that the reply of our Lord to this man, does not conflict, in the least, with the apostolic direction in 1 Cor. 6 : 1-6.

15. Our Lord takes occasion from this rude interruption, to warn the people against the sin of covetousness and greediness of gain, exemplified so forcibly in the request, which had just been preferred to him. This warning extends onward to v. 21, where he again turns and addresses his disciples, in a somewhat similar discourse. *He said unto them*, i. e. the multitude around him. It will be recollected that in vs. 2-12, he had been speaking to his disciples. *Take heed and beware* (literally, *be on your guard against*). An emphatic fulness of expression, suited to the great evil, against which the people were warned. *Covetousness*. A strong word in the original, signifying *greediness, grasping selfishness*. It is derived from a concrete noun, denoting *one who has or claims more than his share, one who has never enough*. This is the generic idea, and lies at the very basis of *covetousness*. Against this our Lord raised his warning voice in tones of earnest solemnity, which should reach every man down to the end of time, who is inclined to this detestable sin. As it regards the point in hand, it would seem that the omniscient eye of Jesus had detected this vice in the man who interrupted him; or, to say the least, his request, so ill-timed and inappropriate to the peculiar mission of Jesus, indicated the precedence which he gave to things temporal over those spiritual, and which rendered him worthy of censure. *A man's life* in the true and spiritual sense. An existence

eth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a

which is to be eternal, does not consist in the few opening years of its earthly course. Life in its strictest sense, is the sum total of existence; and what are the few days of earth, compared with the boundless eternity in another and higher sphere? *In the abundance, &c.* Happiness in the eternal world, does not depend on the abundance of earthly possessions. Hence how valueless are worldly riches, honors, pleasures, compared with the spiritual gifts and graces which form the sole element of enjoyment in the life to come. That this is the sense of our Lord's words, is evident from their literal translation, *a man's life does not consist in his possessions, even when he has them in abundance.* But apart from its high spiritual signification, a man's earthly life is not perpetuated by a superabundance of earthly treasures. Beyond what is necessary for his personal wants, every thing is mere show and vanity. But then is not wealth a blessing? Most assuredly; but only as it enables one to administer to the wants, and advance the general happiness of others. Olshausen takes the latter clause, *from his possessions*, as denoting that no spiritual power can be ascribed to earthly possessions. But this neither suits the preceding context, nor meets the wants of the following parable, which is framed to show, that riches have no intrinsic power to furnish lasting happiness, or perpetuate life, which is of God, and may be terminated at any moment.

16. *He spake a parable, &c.* The point of this parable has just been alluded to. A man is represented as having become so rich, by the bountiful product of his grounds, that he had no longer place to store away his fruits, whereupon he resolves to build more capacious storehouses, and having filled them with his goods, to give himself up to their enjoyment, free

certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, be-

from all care and fear of want. In the midst of these anticipations of future happiness, he is suddenly called away from earth, and taught the lesson, which he failed to learn until too late, that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of his possessions." The general scope and intent of this parable, cannot well be mistaken. It is well denominated by the old expositors, "the Parable of the Rich Fool." *The ground, &c.* It heightens the force of this parable, that the riches of this man were not the result of extortion, unfair dealing, a sharp eye to business, or a rigid, pinching economy, but of the bountiful harvests with which his industry had been crowned. Yet riches obtained from ever so commendable a source, if trusted in for happiness, will prove futile alike with wealth obtained by unfair means. The word rendered *ground*, literally signifies a *large field* or *farm*, in contradistinction to a diminutive of the same word, denoting a *small field*. The expression is not unlike our plural *grounds*, used for a large and well-cultivated piece of land. This man was therefore already rich, in his extensive landed possessions. *Brought forth plentifully.* The tense in the original does not permit the reference of this to what happened from year to year, that is, a succession of abundant harvests, but to one crop so large, that if it could be well stored, it would suffice for the wants of many years to come, even if such rich harvests should never be yielded him again. We are to guard against the absurd idea, that there would be no further necessity of his tilling his farm. The simple point is, that such an abundant crop, as the present harvest had yielded, placed him beyond all fear of want from comparatively unproductive harvests, in case such should ensue.

17. *He thought within himself.* The



cause I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul,

expression implies anxious thought and deliberation. The whole picture presented of this man, is one of mental excitement, in view of his abundant harvest. Increase of wealth is usually attended with increase of care and anxiety. *Saying* in his thoughts. In his highly excited state, he may have pronounced these words aloud to himself. *Because I have no room, &c.* This was the cause of his disquietude. It was not how he could appropriate in the best way his surplus fruits, but how he could hoard them up in safety. Webster and Wilkinson notice the frequent use of *my*, in this and the two following verses, as if all these had been in his own disposal.

18. *This will I do.* The words are expressive of a well-formed and final determination. He had fully considered the matter, and here is the conclusion to which he had come. *I will pull down, &c.* The site of these storehouses and granaries was so convenient, that he concluded to demolish them, to give room for the erection of others more capacious. The parts of the parable are all in perfect keeping. *Fruits* of the field. *Goods* in general, such as would not fall under the term fruits, but yet included in the general idea of estates. Stier thinks that this word has a shade of irony, indicating the unspeakable folly which takes no account of the things truly good. Dr. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. ii., p. 264), after alluding to the custom of the ancients, to lay by fruits and grains for many years, as is evinced by the storehouses and wells or cisterns for grain, even yet found in Palestine, says, "that this was common is implied in the parable of the

'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou fool*, this night - thy soul shall be required of thee: - then

1 Ec. 11: 9; 1 Co. 15: 32; Ja. 5: 5.    Job 20: 22; & 27: 8; Ps. 52: 7; Ja. 4: 14.    Ps. 89: 6; Ja. 17: 11.

*rich fool*, who built great storehouses, and laid up provisions for many years. If there had been no such storehouses in the land, and the custom of laying up grain for many years unknown, the terms of the parable would have lacked verisimilitude, a defect in construction which attaches to none of our Lord's parables."

19. *To my soul*, i. e. to myself. This word is here to be distinguished from the *spirit*, or higher nature of man. It refers to his lower, sensuous nature, serving as a sort of connecting link between the body and the immortal spirit. Hence, as Olshausen observes, the soul, as susceptible of education and development, can be alike lowered to *flesh*, or elevated to *spirit*. The rich man by addressing these words to his soul, debased it to the low enjoyment of things merely fleshly and sensual. It was commanded to "take its ease, eat, drink, and be merry," that is, to substitute for its high intellectual and spiritual enjoyment, the low sensual pleasures of the animal nature. The last verb, *be merry*, signifies *to be of happy mind*, and well denotes the freedom from all care and concern which resulted from this abundant accession of wealth.

20. *But God said, &c.* What an antithesis is here introduced! How awfully do these words of God peal forth, as thunder from the bosom of a dark cloud, blackening the heavens, which but a few moments previous were glowing with the splendors of the noon-day sun. *Said* in effect, by the sudden and awful stroke of his providence. *Thou fool*; literally, *fool!* the deep scorn of the epithet being weakened, by the unnecessary pronoun in our English version. We

whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

21 So is he that layeth up

have here the estimate which God put on his plans for future ease and happiness. *This night* stands opposed to *years*, in v. 19. It is here implied that it was in the night, the usual hour of repose, that the rich man formed the determination expressed in v. 19. His great and unexpected wealth threw him into such a state of restless, feverish anxiety, as to the disposition for safe keeping, which he should make of his treasures, that he lay awake, planning and revolving one scheme after another, until he came to the conclusion here stated, when his joyous anticipations were arrested by the awful announcement, *this night* (literally *this very night*) *thy soul* (which thou hast debased to the mere sensual enjoyment of the brute) *shall be required of thee*. Bengel remarks that the night is the time for divine revelations to men (Job 27: 20), and also of sudden deaths. The parable is here very natural and impressive. The outlines are so distinct, that it may readily be filled up. The soul of the rich man was required on the very night in which he had made such provisions for his future ease and comfort, that all solicitude on that score was removed. The sudden and tumultuous joy, which in the night-watches followed these visions of future happiness, may be supposed to have brought on apoplexy or some other cause of sudden death. This however is mere conjecture, and has little to do with the great point of the parable, that in the midst of earthly prosperity, God can call us away by any of his agencies, and show how valueless are the things of earth, on which we are prone to place our affections. The expression, *thy soul shall be required*, is literally, shall require *thy soul*, the subject of the verb being omitted. Some interpreters supply *they* referring to the angels, the ministers of God's purposes. But such verbs are often employed in an impersonal sense, leaving the subject undetermined. This is quite a common practice with Luke. See v. 48;

treasure for himself, 'and is not rich toward God.

o Mat. 6: 20; v. 23; 1 Ti. 6: 18, 19; Ja. 2: 5.

6: 38, 44; 13: 29; 14: 35; 16: 4, 9; 23: 29. Webster and Wilkinson suggest that it may here be so used, to soften the announcement. If so, may we not refer the subject to bad angels, commissioned to convey the souls of the wicked dead to the place of their punishment? Good angels conveyed the soul of Lazarus to the abodes of bliss. May we not by a parity of reasoning assign to evil angels the same service, in respect to those who are condemned after death to the torments of the lost? *Then whose shall these things be, &c.* They shall no longer be thine. Thy soul can repose on them for no further happiness. This is the obvious scope of the inquiry, which nothing but the most perverse criticism would refer to the shallow question, as to what one of his heirs should possess his property. It is intended as a strong emphatic denial, that it would be his after death, and that it could therefore furnish any happiness to his soul beyond the grave. It is a brief and pointed question, involving a weighty truth, upon which the votaries of riches would do well to ponder, before the fatal summons shall render unavailing, all efforts to avert divine displeasure by repentance and faith in Christ.

21. *So is he.* The original is brief and emphatic, *thus he*, i. e. such is the folly and disastrous end of him who aims to amass worldly riches, and does not seek those enduring treasures, which are secured by acts of piety and benevolence. *Layeth up treasure for himself.* See N. on Matt. 6: 19. *Is not rich toward God.* This is antithetic to the preceding clause, and with the proper use of earthly riches, embraces also the idea of spiritual treasures, called in 16: 11, *the true riches*, and in Prov. 8: 18, *durable riches*. See also Eph. 1: 18; Col. 1: 17; James 2: 5. *Toward God*, as opposed to the preceding words *for himself*, designates supreme love to Him, in opposition to the natural state of man, which is one of supreme selfishness. It is implied also

22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, 'Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body is *more* than raiment.

24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse, nor barn; and 'God feedeth them: how

p Mat. 6: 25. q Job 38: 41; Ps. 147: 9.

that while man can *lay up treasure for himself*, he cannot do this for God, whose are already the riches of the universe. Men's wealth in this higher and truer sense, consists in the proper use of the divine gifts and blessings, and not in laying them up for his selfish gratifications. The phrase is equivalent to, "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matt. 6: 20).

22-31. These directions are found, with slight verbal variations and trifling omissions and additions, in Matt. 6: 25-33, on which see Notes. This portion of the chapter is however so closely connected in form and sentiment with what immediately precedes, that it must be regarded as forming a part of the conversation which ensued after our Lord came out of the Pharisee's house. There is nothing strange in the repetition of this portion of the Sermon on the Mount. The caution against covetousness addressed to the people, and the danger to which the disciples were exposed from the same insidious and widely prevalent vice, rendered it highly befitting, that he should impress upon their minds those great truths which he had before laid down. It is the overlooking of this fact that our Lord often repeated his sayings, which has perplexed and misled many expositors, and caused them to wrest passages from their true position, in their vain attempts to harmonize them chronologically with the parallel passages in other Evangelists. It is far more natural to suppose, that

much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

our Lord repeated this portion of his Sermon on the Mount, than that Luke should have detached it from that discourse, and connected it with the parable of the rich fool, as we here find it.

22. *Therefore*, in consequence of the vanity of earthly riches, *I say to you*. The collocation of the original is more emphatic, *to you I say*. The word *you* is strongly contrasted with *them*, referring to the multitude in v. 15. The disciples were not to regard themselves as exempt from the danger of covetousness, or to consider themselves beyond the necessity of warnings in reference thereto. Our Lord therefore turns to them now, with special directions in regard to the anxieties and cares of life.

25. This verse shows that *stature* is to be translated *life*, or *the time of one's life*, for a cubit added to one's stature, could by no means be considered a *thing which is least*, whereas in the sense of *time*, it would be a very appropriate expression. See N. on Matt. 6: 27. The connection of this form of expression with the sudden death of the rich fool, gives to the meaning *time*, a special appropriateness.

27. *Consider the lilies, &c.* "The Håleh lily is very large, and the three inner petals meet above, and form a gorgeous canopy, such as art never approached, and king never sat under, even in his utmost glory. And when I met this incomparable flower in all its loveliness, among the oak woods around the northern base of Tabor, and on the

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after :

hills of Nazareth, where our Lord spent his youth, I felt assured that it was this to which he referred. We call it the Hülch lily, because it was here that it was first discovered . . . . Our flower delights most in valleys (Sol. Song 2 : 1, 2, 16), but is also found on the mountains. It grows among thorns, and I have had my hands sadly lacerated in extricating it from them. Nothing can be in higher contrast than the luxuriant, velvet softness of this lily, and the crabbed tangled hedge of thorns about it." Thomson, Land and Book, vol. i. p. 393.

28, 29. *So clothe*, i. e. *so invest*, the word being used of sumptuous apparel. The terms of the discourse are all elevated and striking. In this there is a decided advance in Luke, beyond what we find in the parallel portion in Matthew. *Seek not*, a strong expression for anxious desire. *Be ye of doubtful mind*, refers to the vacillation between hope and fear, which characterizes those whose confidence is not fully reposed in the protecting care of God. Webster and Wilkinson render this, *be not unsettled in mind*. The verb literally signifies, *to raise up, to keep on high*, so as to keep poised or wavering; hence *to buoy up* or *excite* the mind with false hopes and airy schemes. Such persons are liable to be unduly elevated or depressed, as their schemes and projects bid fair to be successful or the opposite.

30. *All these things*, i. e. these earthly cares, anxieties, and pursuits. *Nations*, Gentiles, heathen, *of the world* outside the Jewish nation.

31. See Ns. on Matt. 6 : 33.

32. This verse stands connected with the preceding context, as a ground of

and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 'But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for 'it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 'Sell that ye have, and give

r Mat. 6 : 33. s Mat. 11 : 25, 26.  
t Mat. 19 : 21; Ac. 2 : 45; & 4 : 34.

encouragement, that all their wants will be supplied. If it is their Father's pleasure to prepare them a kingdom, as the greater includes the less, *much more* (argument *a fortiori*). See N. on Matt. 5 : 15) will he bestow upon them these minor blessings. *Little flock*, i. e. a flock few in numbers. The word rendered *flock*, is a diminutive, and rendered still more so by the epithet *little*. Compared with the vast numbers who rejected the claims of Jesus, they were indeed a little band, but yet upon them and not upon the Israelitish nation at large, were the blessings of the Messianic kingdom to be bestowed. The relation of shepherd to his people is glanced at, in the word *flock*, but is enlarged upon and rendered more prominent in John 10 : 1-18. *It is your Father's good pleasure*, i. e. it is the benignant purpose of your Father. Hence his care and protection exercised in their behalf, was not one of doubt or uncertainty, but provided for by his unchangeable purpose and love. *The kingdom*, i. e. the blessings and privileges of the Messianic kingdom. See N. on Matt. 8 : 11. The general sentiment is: Have no solicitude for the supply of your bodily wants, for all such minor blessings are implied in the kingdom, which your Father has been pleased to give you. It is well paraphrased by Dr. Burton. "I told you to seek the kingdom of God (v. 31); and I now say, that God intends to give you this kingdom. Do not therefore value your worldly possessions, but prepare for the world to come."

33. *Sell that ye have*. This is a strong positive direction, for the negative one

alms; "provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

u Mat. 6: 30; ch. 16: 9; 1 Ti. 6: 19.

in Matt. 6: 19. They were not to lay up for themselves treasures upon earth, but to convert their property into that which might be distributed among the poor. The duty of almsgiving is thus most strongly enforced. The fact that God had provided for them a kingdom, and would not be unmindful of their temporal wants, is adduced as a reason, why they should give freely of their substance to the poor. They were not to hoard up their riches, through fear of future want, but casting their care upon God, they were to dispense with liberal hand to the necessities of others. The sentiment finds its parallel in 11: 41, on which see Note. This command brings out a great principle, but is not to be interpreted as teaching that a man must literally sell all his possessions, and distribute the avails to the poor; for in such a case, there would be no individual property, but all would be scattered at once to the winds. The command imposes upon every man such active, whole-hearted benevolence, that he would be willing to part with all his possessions, if the cause of his Redeemer, and the interests of his fellow-men demanded the sacrifice. *Bags which wax not old.* Provision for future and enduring happiness, is here set forth, under the imagery of bags or purses made of such lasting material, as never to wear out, or become rotten. So in the next clause, *unfailing treasures* are clearly referred, by the words *in the heavens*, to those spiritual riches, which alone are durable and worth possessing. The imperishable nature of these riches are further set forth, in their exemption from thieves and moth, to which earthly riches are exposed. See N. on Matthew 6: 20.

34. *For where your treasure is, &c.* See N. on Matt. 6: 21. This shows that v. 33 finds its parallel in Matt. 6: 19, 20.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

35 "Let your loins be girded about, and 'your lights burning;

o Ep. 6: 14; 1 Pe. 1: 13. y Mat. 25: 1, &c.

35-48. In this passage, our Lord enjoins the duty of continual and unremitted watchfulness. The train of thought is much like that of Matt. 24: 42-51, on which see Notes. The notion of Olshausen, that Matthew borrowed that portion of the discourse from Luke, and introduced it out of its original connection, is certainly erroneous, for both passages have undisputed claims to originality, and suit well the context. But there is besides a moral consideration, impelling us to the belief, that Matthew has inserted in that great discourse, which grew out of the question proposed by the disciples, as to when Jerusalem would be destroyed, only what was actually spoken by our Lord. Detached and independent truths may be arranged by a writer, without regard to the precise time or connection of their utterance. But not so with a discourse, like that of Matthew, which professes to have been pronounced on the Mount of Olives, and in reply to a specific question, proposed by the disciples. To weave into that answer, as though actually spoken, portions of discourses pronounced, on other occasions, by Jesus, would be so dishonest an act, that we should be slow to impute it to Matthew. That our Lord repeated on that occasion, what he here enjoined upon his disciples, we cheerfully concede; for, as we have remarked (N. on v. 22), this seems to have been his custom in regard to weighty and important truths.

35. *Let your loins, &c.* The allusion is to the long flowing robes of the Orientals, which were drawn up, and held fast by the girdle, when active exercise was demanded. See N. on v. 37. The disciples of Christ were to be in continual readiness for active duty. This is emphatically denoted by the

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

structure of the original: *Be your loins having been girded about*, where the verb denotes the continual state or being, and the participle, the condition of readiness previously entered upon. *And your lights burning*, so as to be in readiness for the coming of your Lord. The same marriage custom lies at the foundation of this imagery, as in the parable of the ten virgins in Matt. 25:1-13. There the virgins were to be in readiness to join with lighted torches the bridal procession, on the way to the house of the bridegroom's father. Here the servants were to be in readiness with lamps burning, to receive the procession, as it approached the house, where the subsequent marriage festivity was to take place. Not only were their loins to be so girt, that they could hasten forth without delay, but their lamps were to be kept burning for ready use.

36. This verse is not an empty repetition of the preceding one, but contains a distinct and specific direction of great importance. In the preceding verse, they were to be in a state of continual readiness to receive their Lord. Here constant watchfulness is enjoined. The injunction was necessary, for external preparation would be useless, unless accompanied with watchfulness and fidelity, on the part of his disciples. *Ye yourselves*, is put here for the internal man, as opposed to the external preparation of the girded loins and lighted lamps. *Men*, i. e. men-servants. *That wait for their lord*. Here, as we have said, lies the difference between these servants and the virgins in Matthew. They were waiting to join the marriage procession, these, to receive their lord, on his return to his own house. The only question of doubt is, whether the *lord* referred to here, was the bridegroom

37 'Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down

\* Mat. 24: 46.

himself returning in marriage procession to the house of his father, or some friend of the bridegroom returning to his own home, after attending upon the marriage festivity of his friend. I cannot hesitate a moment, in referring it to the bridegroom himself. These servants were undoubtedly those to whom was designated the duty of opening the portals of the house, to receive, with the brilliant glare of torches, the wedding train, as it entered with music and gladness, the house of the bridegroom, to which the bride, surrounded by her attendant virgins, was conducted. This establishes a beautiful harmony between this passage and the one in Matthew, giving completeness to the picture, and rendering the one explanatory of the other. *That when he cometh, &c.* As they knew not the precise time of his return, there was necessity for constant watchfulness. *Immediately* is here a word of great emphasis. The master of the house was not to be detained a moment from entering his dwelling. All the preparations for his reception were to be made beforehand, and the servants were to stand ready and watchful, to admit their lord upon the first signal of his approach.

37. Our Lord now encourages his disciples, by announcing the reward to be bestowed upon the faithful and watchful servants. *Verily I say unto you*. See N. on Matt. 5:18. *He shall gird himself*, i. e. gather up his flowing robe, and bind it with his girdle, so as not to be impeded in the work before him. See N. on v. 35. The servants had girded themselves, and stood in readiness to open unto their lord. Now he changes his relative position, and rewards their fidelity by serving them. *He makes them to sit down to meat, and comes forth and serves them.* "The

to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants.

39 "And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come,

α Mat. 24: 43; 1 Th. 5: 2; 2 Pe. 3: 10; Re. 3: 3; & 16: 15.

Saviour will receive his faithful people to himself, and to the enjoyment of heavenly blessedness, as freely, cordially, and completely, as if he himself should serve them and minister to their bliss." Webster and Wilkinson. The illustration is not taken from the usual conduct of masters to servants, for the grace and condescension, which it illustrates, has no parallel on earth. The reward of those who are faithful, will be of grace, and not of debt. Eph. 3: 20. It had one illustration on earth, and that was in the incident referred to in John 13: 4-12. In comparing this with 17: 8, there will be found no essential difference, for there the truth is illustrated, that all are unprofitable servants, but here, the wonderful condescension of the lord towards his servants, who had well discharged the duties assigned to them. "The Lord himself, in that great day of his glory—the marriage supper of the Lamb—will invert the order of human requirements (see 17: 8), and in the fulness of his grace and love, will serve his brethren,—the Redeemer, his redeemed,—the Shepherd, his flock." Alford. The same love and condescension is illustrated in Rev. 3: 20.

38. *In the second watch.* The first watch is not mentioned, because the wedding-feast took place during that time. Olshausen thinks that the omission of the fourth watch, shows that the Jewish division of the night into three watches is here referred to. But I like Alford's suggestion, that the fourth watch is not mentioned, because the return at so late an hour was im-

probable. On the division of the night into watches, see N. on Matt. 14: 25. *Find them so*, i. e. in such a state of readiness to receive him. *Blessed are those servants*, &c. An emphatic repetition of v. 37.

40 'Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 ¶ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

δ Mat. 24: 44; & 25: 13; Ma. 13: 33; ch. 21: 34, 36; 1 Th. 5: 6; 2 Pe. 3: 12.

probable. On the division of the night into watches, see N. on Matt. 14: 25. *Find them so*, i. e. in such a state of readiness to receive him. *Blessed are those servants*, &c. An emphatic repetition of v. 37.

39, 40. The necessity of continued and unrelaxed vigilance, is further illustrated by a householder, into whose house the thief entered, in consequence of the remissness with which he kept watch against his approach. The connection of this with the preceding context, is thus rendered obvious. This passage is repeated with hardly any variation, in our Lord's great prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives. See Matt. 24: 43, 44 (Note), and also Rev. 3: 3; 16: 15.

41: Some of the foregoing directions appeared to be of such general application, that Peter was in doubt, whether they were intended for him and his fellow-disciples, or for the whole multitude (v. 1). Peter refers by *this parable*, to all the cautions, directions, and illustrations, contained in vs. 32-40. Some commentators, who seem bent on making Matthew indebted to the present discourse, for the corresponding portions of the discourse on Mount Olivet, refer here to the fact, that Matthew omits this question of Peter, which renders our Lord's *who then* (Matt. 24: 45) rather obscure. To this it may be replied, that Matthew omitted this question of Peter, for the sole reason, that it was not proposed on that occasion, as none but the apostles were present, and it would have therefore had no appropriateness. The connect-

42 And the Lord said, 'Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them* *their* portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44 'Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 'But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maid-

c Mat. 24: 45; & 25: 21; 1 Co. 4: 2.

d Mat. 24: 47. e Mat. 24: 48.

ive *then* in Matthew, is just what is required to bring out the inferential relation, which the verse in which it is found, sustains to the preceding context. Here it connects in like manner v. 42, as an inference from what is implied in Peter's question.

42. Our Lord does not reply in direct terms to the inquiry of Peter. His words seem, however, to have special reference to the apostles and ministers of Christ, who, as faithful and wise stewards, raised to be head-servants of the household of the faith, were to be particularly entitled to the blessedness of those who were found watchful at his coming. But in a more general sense, the discourse is applicable to all who belong to the family of Christ. For the verbal comments on vs. 42-46, see Ns. on Matt. 24: 45-51. *Over his household.* The construction of the original refers to a constant and vigilant oversight, as though his authority and supervision rested upon his charge continually. Opposed to this quiet, and faithful discharge of his trust, is the noisy, boisterous, heartless, and licentious conduct of the faithless steward referred to in v. 45.

47. 'In this verse, our Lord lays down the rule of judgment, by which demerits are to be graded and punished. Which

ens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And 'that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

48 'But he that knew not,

f Nu. 15: 30; De. 25: 2; John 9: 41; & 15: 22; Ac. 17: 30; Ja. 4: 17. g Le. 5: 17; 1 Ti. 1: 18.

*knew his lord's will* by an open express command, such as Jesus was then giving his disciples. This is to be referred back to the question of Peter. The apostles were pre-eminently entitled to rewards, as head-stewards in the family of Christ, in case they wisely and faithfully discharged the duties of the high trust reposed in them. But if, like the wicked steward, they should abuse their Lord's confidence, and prove faithless, tyrannical, and licentious, their destruction would be swift and terrible. Their high station and superior opportunities to know their Lord's will, would aggravate their doom, and render their punishment more intolerable. Such is the obvious connection of this verse with the preceding context. *Prepared not himself*; literally, *did not hold himself in readiness* to execute his lord's command. *To his will*, i. e. his declared will and purpose. *With many stripes.* The word *stripes*, is supplied from the following verse. The punishment here referred to is a servile one, being such as was inflicted by a master upon his servant.

48. *He that knew not.* This refers to comparative and not absolute ignorance. In Rom. 2: 14, 15, it is clearly shown that none are absolutely devoid of the knowledge of God's will. See also Rom.



and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

1: 20, where the heathen even are declared to be without excuse for sin, in consequence of the abundant knowledge of God, derived from the works of creation. *Did things worthy of stripes.* His acts of disobedience may have been even more glaring than those of his fellow-servant, who knew his lord's will, but his sins being comparatively unintentional, his punishment on that account will be less severe. Alford says that it is difficult to assign any spiritual meaning to *many stripes*. But may we not rightly infer from this passage, as well as from the grades of bliss and glory in the rewards of the righteous (1 Cor. 15: 41), that there are different degrees of punishment among the lost? This is a reasonable conjecture, and certainly finds much support, if not absolute proof, from this passage. *For unto whomsoever, &c.* This passage finds its best explanation in Matt. 25: 15-29, where the servant, who had received five talents, gained beside them five talents, and he that had received two, gained also other two. The principle is one of common application, that the possession of great gifts, involves a corresponding accountability, that accumulation of gifts, graces, and influence is the great law of God's house, and whoever violates that law, and suffers his talents to lie dormant, or squanders them upon his depraved lusts, passions, and appetites, will bring upon himself the divine displeasure. *Much is given—much will be required.* The latter *much* is not identically the former, but rather its avails or fruits, or in the language of the parable, which I have referred to, as elucidating and enforcing this active improvement of our endowments and opportunities for usefulness, the *five talents* gained from the right use of the

49 <sup>a</sup> I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

50 But <sup>a</sup> I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

A V. 51. <sup>a</sup> Mat. 20: 22; Ma. 10: 38.

five talents previously committed to him. So in the next clause, the word *more*, is equivalent to the preceding *much*, and whatever gain there may have been besides. The requisition on the service of Christ's followers is stringent, exacting, and unrelenting. But it must be remembered, that all these gifts, endowments, and means of usefulness, are but varied forms of expression to denote the efforts, which all should make to promote their own eternal happiness and that of others, and therefore a firm and unyielding exaction of service and responsibility, is a merciful provision on the part of God, to secure the chief good of his creatures.

49. This verse has been the subject of much discussion, and as is usual with passages involving difficulties, it has received a variety of interpretations. Olshausen remarks: "The last section of the discourse of Jesus conveys a very weighty, we might say alarming truth. The consciousness that our responsibility increases with the talents intrusted to us, might awaken anxiety on the part of his disciples. This anxiety the Lord *alleviates* by placing himself at their side, with the view of imparting to entire humanity a higher life, but with the prospect of encountering for this very reason the greatest labors. Before each of his disciples, therefore, the Saviour places as inevitable, the necessity of entering into a severe struggle, for this is involved in his own appearance." Doddridge makes the connection to be this: "After all I have said to promote humanity and charity, yet it will in fact appear that *I am come to send fire on the earth*, so opposite is my doctrine to the prejudices and the lusts of men, and such are the violent contentions that my gospel will occasion, through the wickedness

51 'Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I

& Mat. 10: 34; v. 49.

of those to whom it is preached." Grotius contends that our Lord passes from the necessity of Christian vigilance and watchfulness, to those times of persecution, in which it would be most especially needed. "*Fire* probably means persecution for the faith." Webster and Wilkinson. All these and other expositions which might be cited, are based on the idea, that *fire* is here to be taken as the element of discord. This was a very natural inference from the variances and contentions spoken of in vs. 51-53. The cause of these strifes and dissensions they assume to be the *fire*, which our Lord sent upon the earth, and thus they interpret it. But may not those contentions referred to in vs. 51-53, be the *result* of the fire, rather than that in which it consists? In the light of 3: 16, Matt. 3: 11 (on which see Note), and Acts 1: 5, compared with Acts 2: 3, may we not interpret this *sending of fire* to be the descent of the Holy Ghost, the effect of which would be the conversion of some, and the malignant opposition to truth of others? Has not this been verified in the history of all nations, where the gospel has been preached? This view I regard as the true one, and it receives confirmation, not only from the foregoing considerations, but from the very form of the expression, *to send* (from heaven) *fire into the earth*. It is not the fire of discord already enkindled upon the earth, and to be fanned into more intense and raging action, by the advent of Christ, but it is a fire *sent down* upon the earth. It is something which had not yet been known among men, but a heavenly gift to be enjoyed in the future. Corroborative of this is the following clause, *what will I, if it be already kindled*, which is evidently expressive of strong desire on the part of our Lord, that this advent of fire might soon be realized. This would scarcely have been his wish, if the fire spoken of was one of discord, strife, and even of persecution, as Web-

ster and Wilkinson suppose. Our common translation of this latter clause fails to bring out its true sense, which is this, *and what do I wish? Would that it were already kindled!* or, as Bloomfield slightly varies it, *and what should I (have to) wish, if it were but already kindled?* This gives point and consistency to the following verse, the sentiment of which is, *but* (before this great blessing of the descent of the Holy Ghost, symbolized by *fire*, can be fully enjoyed), *I have a baptism to be baptized with*, i. e. I am to be bathed in sufferings and death. The great blessing is to be purchased by agonies, in view of which my soul is *straitened* (literally, *held compressed, shut up*), until they have been undergone and *accomplished*. This train of thought is consistent, natural, and harmonious with the imagery, which represents the descent of the Spirit as a *baptism of fire* (for such is the true interpretation of Matt. 3: 11), and does no violence whatever to the construction of the original. The position of *fire*, in the original, renders it very emphatic, *fire have I come to send*, &c. So *baptism* in the next verse, has the emphatic position, *a baptism have I to be baptized with*. *How am I*; literally, *how greatly am I*, &c. Stier's view of the interpretation of this passage coincides with the above. "What was this fire? The all-quickenng fire," as Novalis correctly calls it, "which is opposed to the waters of death; the fire of the Spirit, with which, according to the Baptist's early word, he was to baptize unto a new life, the Pentecostal fire in the pure sense of that word. This is the fire of divine love, which the Holy Ghost kindles in the hearts of all believers."

1 Mt. 7: 6; John 7: 42; & 9: 16; & 10: 19.

51. Now comes one of the results of the gift of the Spirit in producing alienations, strifes, discords, separations, even in families united by the closest relationship. Its introduction in this connection is natural and appropriate. The great blessing of the

52 - For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

m. Mat. 10 : 35.

Spirit's influence to be shed upon men, for the realization of which our Lord declared himself impatient, even though it were to be achieved by agonies unutterably great, was yet to be followed through the perverseness of men, with results, which should rend asunder the strongest ties of earthly relationship, and light the torch of discord, throughout every community where the gospel was made known. Now if the sending of fire referred to in v. 49, were the sending of this discord directly instead of incidentally, the statement here made would be but a tame repetition of the same idea. But if we refer that to the gift of the Spirit, and this discord to the result, we have a progressive and well connected train of thought, with no repetition, or undue expansion of the same idea. The question may be asked, if the result of the dispensation of the Spirit is to bring on this discordant state of things, may it not be well and properly defined, that this fire of contention was sent of Christ, as it is claimed by some to be affirmed in v. 49? It may be replied to this, that it is one thing to affirm that Christ has sent directly the brands of discord among men, and quite another to affirm that he has sent the convicting, sanctifying influences of his Spirit, which like fire shall penetrate with its purifying influence the masses of the community, bringing some to unconditional submission to God, and incidentally by the agency of second causes, arousing in the minds of others the most open and bitter hostility. The latter is the office-work of the Spirit, the former is not. Christianity is not responsible for the wars and bloodshed, which have marked her history since the Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit. Her enemies have charged this upon her, but falsely and with malicious intent.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the

Her mission has been one of peace. The office of the Spirit is to allay the stormy passions of the soul, to bring the hearts of men into sympathy with the great law of benevolence and love, laid down in Matt. 5 : 44. But if v. 49 is to be interpreted, as the fire of discord sent directly by Jesus, we shall have to acknowledge the mission of the gospel, to be far different from what we have heretofore claimed it to be. It may be well to remark, in addition, that the sentiment of vs. 49, 50, is intended to be one of encouragement. He had just laid down a rule of judgment, which enforced so rigid a personal accountability, that his disciples might well cry out, Who then can avoid the penalty due to transgression, if stripes are to follow both intentional and unintentional sins? Our Lord, in the way of encouragement, promises to send them the Holy Spirit, which like fire shall purify them from the dross of sin, and render them acceptable to God. But this very Spirit, whose renovating, sanctifying influence, they were to experience in such rich degree, would be the means of such a separation in feeling and action, between persons of the same community, and even family, that it would be a source of division and alienation, as though our Lord, by whose death were purchased and secured the blessings of the promised Spirit, had come down not to send peace but rather division upon the earth. Such seems to me to be the connected sense of this much controverted passage.

52, 53. See Ns. on Matt. 10 : 34-36. No special meaning is to be given here to the number five, it being selected to give verisimilitude and emphasis to the division spoken of. The alienation was not to be confined to two members of the family, but was to embrace the whole. The number selected was

mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

54 And he said also to the people, "When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

large enough to bring out fully this law of universality, and yet not so large as to expose the argument to the objection, that these dissensions may have arisen from the diverse and conflicting interests, which are apt to interrupt the harmony of large families, rather than from the cause here assigned.

54-59. Our Lord here censures the people for their blindness, in regard to the signs of the times. The family alienations and divisions were declared in v. 52, to follow immediately upon his mission. *From henceforth*, from this time onward, there shall be divisions and discords, rending asunder the closest and strongest bonds of friendship and affection. Can ye not discern the approach of this state of things, from the signs of the times? Are you so quick and accurate in your prognostications of the signs betokening fair or foul weather, and can you not read the aspect of the moral heavens, and discern the characteristic of the times now at hand? The sentiment is much like that in Matt. 16 : 1-3, on which see Note.

54. *The people.* The multitudes referred to in v. 1, and who were addressed in vs. 15-21. Then follow directions especially given to his disciples (vs. 22-53). Here he resumes his address to the people. *A cloud rise out of the west.* Showers in Palestine proceed from the west, in which direction lay the Mediterranean. See 1 Kings 18 : 44. "As in ancient times, the west wind brings rain, and the north drives it away." Thomson, *Land and Book*, vol. i. p. 131.

55. *There will be heat*, as the south wind blows from the equatorial region. The Arabian desert also lay south of Palestine, from which the wind some-

55 And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

• Mat. 16 : 2.

times blew with almost scorching intensity. The word rendered *heat*, literally signifies, a *burning heat*.

56. See N. on Matt. 16 : 3. *Ye can judge*, i. e. discern, distinguish, form a judgment of. *And of the earth.* This refers to the appearance of the hills, trees, herba, and the like, whence prognosticators of the weather draw also their signs of rain and heat. *How is it? Intensive; how strange is it? This time.* In Matthew, *the signs of the times.* The Messianic times are evidently referred to. Our Lord here teaches that there are in the moral heavens, as clear indications of the providential designs of God, in reference to the church and its triumphs, as are to be read in reference to the weather in the natural heavens, and the direction of the wind. "The material and moral world are under the same government, and are equally subject to human observation, in order that we may find out the ways of God." Webster and Wilkinson. Daniel addressed himself to the study of the signs of the times, as indicated in the prophecies, and in the course of events then taking place, and divined therefrom the near approach of the restoration of God's people to their own native land. See Dan. 9 : 2. Simeon, and Anna, and other pious Israelites, were in a state of confident expectation of the advent of the Messiah, from the signs of the times, which they were in the light of prophecy so diligently studying. It is the duty of all God's people to be quick to discern the indications of his providence, in regard to the various modes of Christian action and benevolence, which the state of the world now makes obligatory upon all, who pray for the welfare of Zion. The eye of the church is yet dull to read the glorious future,

57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

58 When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

o Pr. 25 : 8; Mat. 5 : 25.  
p See Pa. 22 : 6; Is. 55 : 4.

which the book of divine providence, as well as of revelation, shows to be rapidly drawing near.

57. The argument progresses in its proof of their moral dulness, insincerity, and wilful misapprehension of the ways of God. The word *yea*, is not found in the original, and is unnecessarily inserted by our translators. *And why even*. There is a slight adversative shade, which would be expressed most in accordance with the original, *but why even*. The words of *yourselves*, refer to the ability to read the signs of the times, by the exercise of their own judgment and reflective powers, without the aid of those signs and wonders, which Jesus had condescended to display in proof of his Messiahship. There is therefore an antithesis, between their ability of themselves to judge of the character and claims of Jesus, and the aid which they were receiving from him in interpreting the Messianic signs. Olshausen opposes it to the higher spiritual nature within, from which the discriminating act proceeds. But the argument is very obscure and unsatisfactory, by which he supports this view. "Our Lord appeals to their natural conscience, reason, and judgment, as sufficient to guide them to this conclusion." Webster and Wilkinson. Dr. Burton thus paraphrases it: "You might learn this from the declaration of the prophets; but why do you not learn your duty in this respect, from what you do in ordinary cases?" The argument is very simple and plain. If you would bestow the care and attention upon the usual aspect of the times, that you do in prognostications of the weather, you would stand in need of no further assistance, to enable you to arrive at the truth in reference to these Messianic times. *What is right* refers to a right judgment,

ered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

in regard to the true character of Jesus.

58, 59. In these verses, our Lord adduces an example of the prudent and thoughtful care, which they bestowed on their earthly concerns, and the prompt action, which characterized their efforts in courts of human litigation, to avoid the sentence of the law. The word *when*, would have been more literally and clearly translated *for instance when*. This is repeated from the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5 : 25, 26), with a slight verbal variation. The connection here is such as to place beyond a doubt, that its reference is not to a mere prudential avoidance of the expenses, delays, uncertainties, and judgments of human tribunals, but the dreadful result of procrastination in making one's peace with God. It is an example of what they would do, in relation to their exposure to the righteous judgment of God, if they brought to the consideration of spiritual things, the same prudence, forethought, and energy of action, which marked their conduct in human affairs. These verses are not therefore to be regarded, as thrown in here without design or regard to the connection, but serve to illustrate and confirm the charge of moral blindness and dulness, in relation to the ways and works of God, then in process of development. In regard to the verbal explanation of this passage, the reader is referred to the Note on Matt. 5 : 25, 26. In its spiritual application, Webster and Wilkinson interpret *adversary* as the impersonation of God's law. *Give diligence*; literally, *take pains, do thine utmost*. Stier says that this was a Roman legal formula, but I think that our Lord in addressing, as he did here, the people, would rather employ terms appropriate to the Jewish tribunals, than

## CHAPTER XIII.

THERE were present at that season some that told him of

those derived from Roman jurisprudence, which would tend to excite prejudice in those Galileans, who were so hostile to Roman rule. *That thou mayest be delivered from him.* The impossibility of so satisfying the claims of God's holy law, as to be delivered from its penalty, was a matter, which might be apprehended by natural reason, and hence of themselves they might have seen their need of the intervention of just such a Saviour, as the signs of the times, together with his miracles and doctrine, showed Jesus to be. The word rendered *judge*, is a varied repetition of the preceding word *magistrate*. God is the Judge (Ps. 50 : 6; Eccles. 3 : 17; Rom. 2 : 6; Heb. 12 : 23), but in the economy of redemption, the Father hath committed all judgment into the hands of the Son. John 5 : 22, 27; Acts 17 : 31. *And the judge deliver thee, &c.* See Ns. on Matt. 13 : 41, 42. *Officer*; literally, *a doer*, used of an officer, whose duty it was to exact payment, especially of taxes and public imposts. The very term itself is therefore expressive of the utter hopelessness of avoiding the penalty of the law, in any other way, than by a full satisfaction of the claims of justice. On the value of the *mite*, see N. on Mark 12 : 42.

## CHAPTER XIII.

1-9. THE SLAUGHTER OF CERTAIN GALILEANS, AND THE PARABLE OF THE BARREN FIG-TREE. *Galilee*. This incident is connected with the foregoing discourse, by the words *at that season*, (more literally, *on that same occasion*.) There was probably a pause in his discourse, when these persons who were present (not *came to him*, as some wrongly interpret) reported the slaughter by Pilate of these Galileans. It must, I think, be regarded as a sort of interruption, or presentation of a subject quite foreign from the solemn and spiritual nature of the discourse, to which they with others had been lis-

tening. They were evidently such as made no application of the truth to themselves, but like the covetous man (12 : 13), were thinking of other things, and especially of this occurrence, which had recently taken place, and was so adapted to exasperate the Galileans. As it regards this historical incident, we have no means of determining to what sedition of the Galileans it particularly refers. They are thought by some to have been the followers of Judas of Galilee, who, with Zadock a Sadducee, taught that the tax levied by Quirinus was repugnant to the law of Moses, and therefore not to be paid. Although this insurrectionary movement was repressed (see Acts 5 : 37), yet his followers were quite numerous, and bore no inconsiderable part in the wars with the Romans, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem. See Joseph. Antiq. xviii. 1. § 6; Jewish War, ii. 17. §§ 7-9; vii. 8. §§ 1-6. Such slaughters as the one here referred to, were quite frequent, from the riots which often attended the great feasts at Jerusalem. As the blood of these Galileans was shed, while they were offering sacrifices, the slaughter must have taken place in the outer court of the temple. It was partly from this circumstance, looked upon doubtless by many as a special judgment of God for their sins, and partly from the state of spiritual unconcern, which the introduction of this secular theme in the midst of so solemn and searching a discourse showed these men to evince, that our Lord replied in the manner he did, taking no further notice of the incident, than to draw from it the inference, as to the importance of personal and individual repentance, in order to escape the doom pronounced against sin. Those who translate the verb *came to him*, and do not include, therefore, these persons among our Lord's auditors in the preceding discourse, make the reply of Jesus to hinge solely on the

2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all

the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

3 I tell you, Nay: but, except

popular impression, that great and unexpected calamities and casualties indicated a high degree of wickedness in those upon whom they fell. This was the view which Job's friends took of the calamities that befell him. It is very natural to connect sin and suffering even in the present life, but the visitation of the latter is no sure index of the existence of the former, especially in such degree as to call for special judgments from above. Such a view would overlook the great object of discipline in earthly trials and privations, by which God prepares his children for his presence above.

2. *Suppose ye, &c.* Our Lord knew that such was their thought, although they had given it no open expression. *Were sinners above all the Galileans.* It is not denied by Jesus, that these men were sinners, or that sin is visited by divine judgments, either in this or the future life. He only designs to rectify the popular mistake, that the slaughter of these Galileans proved them to be greater sinners than others who escaped so violent a death. The language of our Lord is aimed at those, who superstitiously attributed every calamity or casualty to the special judgment of God, instead of looking upon all sin as deserving his highest displeasure. Men sometimes suffer from the general sins of the community in which they dwell. National sins are frequently visited on individuals. These slaughters of Pilate, which involved the death of comparatively few, were the foreshadowings of what was to fall upon the whole nation, unless averted by repentance. No one has any right to denounce a fellow-being as an enormous sinner, because some sudden judgment has overtaken him. Olshausen justly remarks that "sin and punishment are not so distributed below, that each instance of suffering on the part of an individual, must be the consequence of *his own* sin. Hence we cannot from

suffering infer the antecedent sin of the sufferer, but rather the sin of the whole body to which he belongs."

3. *I tell you, Nay.* The original is more emphatic, '*No, I tell you, no such preëminence in sin is to be attributed to them, from this their bloody and cruel death.*' *Except ye repent, &c.* This is an emphatic and solemn declaration, that the sins of all, unless repented of, will lead to certain and irretrievable ruin. If these men who reported the occurrence to our Lord were among his auditors, as I suppose they were, there is a strongly implied censure, that they should suffer their thoughts to wander away from themes, so intimately connected with their spiritual welfare, and rest upon occurrences, which, however important and interesting in a worldly point of view, could bear no comparison in importance with those, to which he had just been directing their attention. The language is a severe rebuke to these men and all others, who ward off the force of truth, by suffering their thoughts to revert to other men, whom they fancy to be greater sinners than themselves, and therefore more exposed to God's righteous judgments. *Repent.* This is the word expressive in the New Testament of evangelical repentance, or a change of mind, disposition, governing purpose. See N. on Matt. 3: 2; 27: 3. *Likewise* is not to be pressed to signify precisely the same kind of death which these Galileans suffered, although this was doubtless true of many, who fell before the Roman sword, in the sanguinary scenes which followed. The similarity consisted rather in the completeness and awful nature of the ruin, which was to come upon them. This was verified in the destruction of Jerusalem, as well as in the previous slaughters, by which Galilee was devastated by the Romans. But it would deprive this passage of its principal significance, to limit it to the temporal judg-

ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they

ments, which were to fall upon the nation. It has a higher and more awful import in the judgments, which will overtake the finally impenitent in the world to come.

4. To illustrate this truth still more forcibly, our Lord refers to the eighteen persons who were killed by the fall of the tower in Siloam, and avers that this providence was not to be interpreted, as indicative of their being greater sinners than others. Such casualties were indeed a part of the general suffering, which sin had entailed upon the race, but were not to be especially referred to, as proofs of the aggravated character of the sins of those who were the subjects of them. These two examples embrace such calamities as are inflicted instrumentally by man, and those also which come more directly from the hand of Providence. This comprehensive view renders the lesson of instruction complete, and precludes the reference of any calamity or misfortune whatever, to the special infliction of the divine judgments for sin. This does not, however, conflict at all with the scriptural view, confirmed by observation, and in many instances, by painful experience, that sin often entails lasting misery, even in the present life, and brings with it its own punishment. Both these views are true, but should never be so confounded, as to make suffering in this world the sign of special judgments from God. This, as we have remarked, was the grand mistake of the friends of Job, his overwhelming calamities being referred by them to a special judgment, in view of some great sin of which he must have been guilty. The *tower in Siloam* was probably near the fountain of the same name (see N. on John 9 : 7) in Jerusalem, which includes therefore the dwellers in Jerusalem in the same doom, which had just been pro-

were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

nounced on the impenitent Galileans. Stier suggests that these persons may have been confined in this tower by the Jewish Sanhedrim, "which would render apt the parallel with the case of the Galileans; in both instances, they were liable to punishment: in the former, they had fallen under the sword of government; in this, they were overtaken by the anticipating judgment of God reinforcing the judgments of men." The word *sinners*, in this verse, is literally *debtors*, on which see N. on Matt. 6 : 12. *Ye shall all* (both Galileans and Jews) *likewise perish*. As the walls and towers of Jerusalem did not fall upon the Jews during the siege, but the famine and sword did the principal work of destruction, the word *likewise*, must have here the same general sense, as in v. 3, and proves the interpretation there given it to be the right one.

6-9. The doom just pronounced upon the Jewish nation, unless it was averted by timely repentance, is still further and more forcibly illustrated by the parable of the *BAREN FIG TREE*, the central idea of which, is the long-suffering of God towards his people, before he visits them with final exclusion. But the parable is also one of private and personal application. Every sinner who remains in impenitence, may and should apply its warning and instruction to his own condition. In the interpretation of the parable, the great features are only to be considered, yet like all parables based upon the affairs of common life, they are not to be pressed too far in their individual application. It is evident that the fig tree refers primarily to the Jewish nation, but in a secondary sense to every impenitent sinner, who enjoys the means of grace. We need give ourselves no trouble, as to what the vineyard, in which this fig tree was



6 He spake also this parable;  
 'A certain *man* had a fig tree

α Ια. 5 : 2; Mat. 21 : 19.

planted, means. The introduction of this feature in the parable is evidently designed to show, that the tree had a position in favorable soil, and where it was prominently exposed to the notice of the owner, as he passed along through his vineyard, inspecting its condition, and seeing what fruit was ripening for his use. The owner of the vineyard is evidently God, who by his word and ordinances had prepared his people, from the time they were chosen to be his peculiar inheritance, to bring forth fruit, corresponding to the culture he was bestowing upon them. But the nation, through the whole line of its history, had been, to a greater or less extent, rebellious, stiff-necked, unproductive of the fruits of holiness, and highly deserving of excision. But why had it been spared so long? Why had prophets been sent from time to time, to call the people to repentance, to announce God's readiness to forgive their rebellious ingratitude if they would turn to Him, and the terrible doom, which awaited them if they persisted in their contumacy and rejection of his rightful authority? It was because they had an *INTERCESSOR*. The dresser of the vineyard urged their being spared, in hope that they would bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Can any one doubt, that this was the office-work of Jesus Christ, and that he is therefore referred to by the *dresser of the vineyard*? Yet Alford refers this to the Holy Spirit, pervading, as a distinct Personality, all the vine dressers, Moses, the Prophets, the Baptist, the Lord himself, the Apostles, and Teachers after him. He adopts this view, on the ground, that it is the Son himself, who is the special owner of the vineyard, because it can only be properly said of him, that *he came seeking fruit* (see John 1 : 11). But this is encompassed with difficulties, and presents a confused view of the subject. The owner is assumed to be our Lord himself, and yet both he

planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

and his apostles, and ministers, as well as Moses, and the whole array of prophets in the old dispensation, are the dressers through the all-pervading *Personality* of the Holy Spirit of God. But can Christ be the owner, and at the same time dresser of the vineyard, without confusing the features of the parable, so as to render them inexplicable? It does not relieve the matter, in my judgment, to make Christ the dresser of the vineyard, through the pervading influence and energy of the Spirit. If he is the dresser, as we believe he is, it is by his own office-work in the economy of redemption, and not in a way which reduces him to be a co-laborer with Moses, the prophets, apostles, and all the ministers of his word. The only explanation unencumbered of difficulties, is that which I have given, in accordance with the view of the great majority of interpreters; and that is, that God is the owner, and Christ the dresser of the vineyard. This brings out the respective office-work of the Father and Son, in the economy of redemption. The former is the Sovereign Lord and Possessor of all things; the latter took upon himself the subordinate office of restoring man to his original state of allegiance and holiness, from which he had fallen. He is the Mediator between God and man, the Intercessor whose urgent plea, 'Spare them a little longer,' secures to men the prolongation of the day and means of grace. Nothing can be more consonant with the office-work of the Son, than the duty and office of the dresser of the vineyard in the parable. The agency of the Holy Spirit, which is the purchase and gift of Christ, is to be referred to the means made use of to reclaim lost men, represented in the parable by the digging about and manuring the tree. In this, as subordinate instrumentalities, are embraced all the means of grace, such as the preaching of truth, the reading of God's word,

7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none:

cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year

the prayers and efforts of the pious in behalf of their perishing fellow-men. These are all to be regarded, as the means which our Great Intercessor and Advocate makes use of, to bring men to repentance, before the time expires, which through his prevalent intercession has been allotted them for this purpose. This makes the functions of the Trinity correspond to the terms of the parable, and relieves it of much of the difficulty, which attends every other mode of explanation.

It is supposed that the term *three years* has reference to the duration of our Lord's public ministry, but this is far-fetched and fanciful. A definite time had to be mentioned to give verisimilitude to the parable. *Three years* seems to have been selected as a number neither too great nor too small. A tree may for some reason remain barren for one or even two years. But if it be fruit-bearing, it will hardly remain barren the third year. Yet that in extreme cases this was so, is evident from the plea of the dresser, to spare it another year, in hopes of bringing it by extra culture into a productive state. *Why cumbereth it the ground; or more literally, also the ground.* It was not only a worthless, unproductive tree, but it also cumbered the ground, injuring the soil, and occupying a space, which might have been applied to the cultivation of some other fruit tree.

8. *This year also* seems to imply, that it was not the first time the owner had threatened to cut down the tree, but was induced to let it remain by the entreaty of the dresser of the vineyard. *Shall dig about it, &c.* i. e. dig holes about the root, cast in manure, as Trench says is done to orange trees in the south of Italy. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i. p. 539) says, "Those who expect to gather good crops of well-flavored figs are particularly attentive to their culture, and not only plough and dig

about them frequently, and manure them plentifully, but they carefully gather out the stones from the orchards, contrary to their general slovenly habits." Illustrations of the happy effect of the process here referred to, in bringing old and unproductive orchards to a state of fruitfulness, are within the observation of all. No remedy is more commonly applied to a barren tree, or one which bears inferior fruit, than to loosen the soil about the roots, and place thereon light manure. *If it bear fruit.*

Our translators have rightly supplied *well*, in the sense that there will be no occasion to remove the tree, if it becomes fruit-bearing. Doddridge, not looking with his usual critical eye to the Greek construction, renders: *perhaps it may bear fruit.* This loses sight of the antithesis, and gives a very weak and frigid sense. *After that, &c.* Future time is here specified, but it is left indefinite. It might be that the tree would be cut down the very next year, or it might be possibly spared still longer. But one thing was certain, if unproductive, it was to be cut down. The decree had gone forth. Nothing could avert its doom, but the yielding of its tribute of fruit to the owner of the vineyard. Even He who was the impersonation of love, the Intercessor, had yielded so far as to say, *after that thou shalt cut it down.* Alford seizes upon this as another argument, that the Son could not be the dresser of the vineyard, inasmuch as he himself in his capacity of final Judge was to cut down the tree. But has not the Father, to whom judgment rightfully belongs, committed all judgment into the hands of the Son (John 5: 22)? Would not the owner of the vineyard most naturally and appropriately cut down the fig tree by the agency of the dresser? Is not our Lord in his office of Judge, as well as Intercessor, subordinate to the Father? "*Thou shalt cut it down,*"

also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it :

9 And if it bear fruit, *well* : and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

It is therefore the very form of expression, which we should have expected from the Son to the Father, who sent him to redeem and reclaim mankind, and to execute judgment upon such as submit not to the divine will. It must also be remembered, that God is angry with the wicked every day, and that the very work of intercession is attributed, in other portions of the Bible, to our blessed Saviour. See Isa. 53 : 12 ; Heb. 7 : 25 ; 9 : 24.

It is well remarked by Olshausen that "the idea of a delay of God's avenging judgment, that time may be left men to turn, runs throughout Scripture." This was particularly true of the Jewish nation, in regard to whom this parable has primary reference. Prophets were sent to warn them of impending judgments. The past history of the nation was rich with illustrations of God's forbearance, and also of his dread judgments executed against sin. In the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the long captivity which followed, there was a foreshadowing of what would again be visited upon the city and people, unless God's judgments were averted by repentance. Year after year, they were provoking God to anger, and yet they were spared. But the time of their final and dreadful excision came. The intercessory prayer of Him whom they had rejected and crucified, was no longer uttered in their behalf. Their very Messiah, who had so long been their Friend and Intercessor, himself came to execute upon them the dreadful judgment, by which their city and nation were destroyed. The application of this parable to the individual sinner is equally solemn, pertinent, and instructive. What instances of divine forbearance are furnished in the lives of wicked men? How often is the interposition of mercy so marked and

10 ¶ And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of in-

apparent, that we can almost hear the tones of entreaty, "Let him alone this year also." But to all there is a limit of divine forbearance. Unless averted by timely repentance, the threatened excision will come, and there will be no power to escape the dreadful doom.

10-21. THE HEALING OF THE INFIRM WOMAN ON THE SABBATH. *Perea*. Luke now passes over to incidents, which took place after our Lord had taken his final leave of Galilee, and had retired to the region beyond Jordan. The best Harmonists place this incident after John 11 : 47-54, where we are told, that in consequence of the counsel of Caiaphas against Jesus, he retired from Jerusalem, to a city called Ephraim, near to the wilderness (see N. on John 11 : 54). That the healing of this woman took place in this region is evident, as Dr. Robinson remarks, because it immediately precedes, and is thus connected with, our Lord's journeying towards Jerusalem (see v. 22).

10. *Was teaching*. The word in the original is strongly expressive of continuous action. It was while he was teaching in the synagogue, that the following miracle took place. The inference is that this woman, although thus bowed down, was an attendant upon the regular synagogue worship, and from the fact that our Lord said nothing to her about the forgiveness of sin, or her sinning any more, she was doubtless to be regarded as a *daughter of Abraham*, not only by natural descent, but in the higher spiritual sense (Gal. 3 : 7). This is also confirmed by the fact, that she glorified God (v. 13) before the whole assembly, which, when all the circumstances of the case are taken into view, shows that her heart was in sympathy with the words of her tongue.

11. *A spirit of infirmity*, i. e. a spirit

firmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up *herself*.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called *her to him*, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 <sup>a</sup> And he laid *his hands on*

<sup>b</sup> Ma. 16: 18; Ac. 9: 17.

causing physical debility and deformity. The power of wicked spirits to produce disease, is abundantly shown in the word of God. See Mark 10: 1; Acts 10: 38; 2 Cor. 12: 7; Job 2: 7. See also N. on Matt. 4: 24. Some expositors have doubted, whether this was a case of real possession. Alford remarks that in direct instances of possession, he did not lay on his hands or touch the person, but only in cases of sickness or bodily infirmity. But granting this to have been his usual custom, the proof of which, however, can only be negative, it would have no force whatever to neutralize the direct and positive assertion, both here and in v. 16, that her disease was the result of demoniacal possession. *Was bound together*, or as we say, *was bent double*. Her disease was spinal and extending down to the loins. *In no wise*, i. e. not at all. She was so bent down, as to be totally unable to raise herself up, or even to look up. *Lift up* the head. Our translators have supplied *herself*, but this is less accordant with the usage of the verb, which refers mostly to the elevation of the head.

12. *When Jesus saw her*; literally, *Jesus having seen her*. He did not wait to be accosted by her or her friends, but in his compassion, he anticipated her request. Indeed she may have been at this time coming into the synagogue, and not yet have been aware of his presence. That she had the faith requisite to be the recipient of his healing power, is evident, as has been remarked (N. on v. 10), from the silence of our Lord respecting it, while in other similar cases, especially when the miracle was wrought in public assemblies, he

her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, 'There are six days in which men ought to work: in

<sup>c</sup> Ex. 20: 9.

demanded some act or declaration of faith, as a prerequisite to the cure. *Art loosed from thine infirmity*. The nature of her disease rendered this form of address appropriate. The muscles of her back had been in a state of rigidity, from which they were now loosed. Reference may also be had to what is said in v. 16, of her having been bound so long by Satan, and now being loosed from this bond by the healing power of Jesus. The tense of the verb *art loosed*, regards the act as already performed, so instantaneous and complete was her cure, upon the laying on of his hands. "With most majestic simplicity he only announces at first the fact—poor woman, thou *art loosed* from thine infirmity, thine eighteen years are ended—lift up thyself, for thou canst!" Stier.

13. *He laid his hands on her*. He did this to confirm her faith, and render the cure, in the eyes of the spectators, palpable and unmistakable as to its source. *Was made straight*; literally, *was set upright*, i. e. had the power of standing erect. What wondrous power and grace on the part of Jesus, and what a relief to this poor woman, whose bodily posture had been such for eighteen years, that she could look only upon the ground!

14. The ruler of the synagogue seeing this miracle, became very indignant, but instead of directly addressing Jesus, turns to the people and upbraids them for the violation of the sabbath, as though they had participated in this transaction. He does not condescend to hold an argument with our Lord, in regard to the lawfulness of the act which he had just performed. He may, perhaps, have called to mind, how on

them therefore come and be healed, and 'not on the sabbath day.

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou hypocrite,*

¶ Mat. 12: 10; Ma. 8: 2; ch. 6: 7; & 14: 8.

a previous occasion, the Pharisees and scribes had been silenced, when they accused Jesus of sabbath-breaking, in healing the man with the withered hand on that day (see 6: 6-11); or he was too indignant to hold any personal conversation with him. At any rate, he chose to administer rebuke to Jesus in this indirect way. He *answered* in such terms, that it was a sort of reply to the address of Jesus to the woman. *Because that Jesus had healed, &c.* This furnishes the reason for his rude, cowardly, and indirect attack upon Jesus. The old Pharisaic leaven of hypocrisy was at work in him, and manifested its presence by this pious horror, at the alleged violation of the sabbath. *There are six days, &c.* He begins as though he were about to repeat the fourth commandment, but so confused and excited is he, that he mingles up with this reference to the law, an unjust, and, as Stier says, a most self-justifying discourse. He indirectly charges the people with working on the sabbath, although in the present instance, they had no connection whatever with the act of healing, which had just been performed on the woman. Nor had she herself any active participation in the affair. She had preferred no request to be healed. She had addressed no words whatever to Jesus. She had simply raised herself upright, when he announced, that she was loosed from her infirmity. No labor whatever had been performed by any of those present, yet he virtually charges them with having violated the sabbath, by informing them, that there are six days in which men ought to work, and that in them they should come to be healed. His whole harangue is absurd and ridiculous. As Stier well remarks, to have obeyed this ruler of the synagogue, the woman ought to have said, "No, Lord, this is the sabbath day, I

'doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering?

¶ Ch. 14: 5.

am not yet loosed, to-morrow I shall be able to lift myself up and praise the Lord." But the malicious intent of this ruler transcends even his folly. He covertly and meanly endeavors to convey the impression, that the cures performed by our Lord, were not supernatural, but such as were produced by human agency, and not therefore to be distinguished from the common medical treatment of patients. The bitterness of his hate is too great for the open expression of this sentiment, and he indignantly inveighs against the violation of the sabbath by the performance of such labors. The words *ought to work*, are referred to, in *come and be healed*, in the next clause, as one of the forms of labor, appropriate only to the six working days.

15. *Lord.* "This title well accords with the assertion of authority, and the tone of the rebuke now assumed by Jesus." Webster and Wilkinson. *Thou hypocrite*; literally, *hypocrite*! See N. on Matt. 23: 24. The hypocrisy and malice of this man richly merited this severe rebuke of our Lord. The address is to him personally, but in the words *each one of you*, all in the synagogue, who shared the ruler's feelings, are included. *Loose his ox, &c.* The illustration conforms to the words, *thou art loosed*, in v. 12. The argument is the same as that employed in Matt. 12: 11, on which see Note. These cavilling Pharisees would take all pains to see that their cattle were well fed and watered on the sabbath day, not, however, from humanity to their beasts, which the law of God required, but from motives of self-interest. This made the argument of our Lord the stronger, for if they would do this on the sabbath day from so low and unworthy a motive, their charge, that he had violated the sabbath in what he had done, was most glaringly hypocrit-

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed

ſ Ch. 19 : 9.

ical and offensive. *Loose his ox, and having led him away, give him drink,* spreads out the successive steps of labor involved in the general act. In this respect, it was something more than the mere utterance of the words, *thou art loosed*, &c. The ease with which his fiat, which they hypocritically denominated labor, was performed, contrasts strongly with the painstaking, with which acts that are purely human are performed.

16. The collocation of the words of this verse in the original, are very emphatic. *This (woman) being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, for eighteen years, ought not (she) to be loosed*, &c. The contrast between this woman and the dumb beast, which they would take such pains to provide with water on the sabbath day, is rendered very emphatic by the prominence given to the fact, that she was a daughter of Abraham. She was not only a human being, and therefore of vastly higher value and importance than a mere animal, but she was a daughter of Abraham, and that too in the highest sense of the term (Gal. 3 : 7). The argument in its application, is one of great strength and pertinency. *Satan*, the great adversary of all good, and the enemy of the human race. What was done by an inferior demon, is here attributed to his prince and leader. *Hath bound, lo, these eighteen years*, is another heightening point of contrast. The beast had been confined in the stall only since the preceding day, and that too by those whose interest it was to treat the animal kindly; but this daughter of Abraham had been held in the bonds of Satan, her most powerful and deadly foe, for eighteen years. The word rendered *lo, behold*, is introduced, as though our Lord was at that time contemplating the long and fruitful bondage to Satan, from

from this bond on the sabbath day?

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people re-

which he had just released her. This knowledge of the duration and cause of her infirmity, indicates our Lord's omniscience. *On the sabbath day*; literally, *on this very sabbath day*. Ought help to have been delayed a single day? Was not her suffering such as to justify immediate relief? The argument (*a fortiori*) of our Lord was convincing, and as we are told in the next verse, put his enemies to shame, and gave great joy to the people. The illustration is more marked and emphatic, than the similar one of the same kind made use of in Matt. 12 : 11; for there the brute animal was in danger of perishing, here it only was exposed to temporary inconvenience for the want of water; there it was a person with a withered hand who was healed, here it was a daughter of Abraham, bowed down through diabolical agency for the long period of eighteen years.

17. *Adversaries*. The word in the original implies deep-seated and permanent opposition, the literal signification being *lying over against* or *opposite to*. The verb translated *were ashamed*, is intensive, *were thoroughly put to shame* being the more literal translation. The idea of disgrace is also attached to it. Their shallow and malignant hypocrisy had been so thoroughly exposed by Jesus, that they were conscious that they had forfeited the respect of the common people, and hence they were filled with a sense of shame and disgrace. Opposed to this was the joy which pervaded the multitude, at the *glorious things which were done by him*. The present tense is employed in the original, which makes it very clear that other miracles were wrought on this same day, in the presence of the multitude. *Rejoiced for all* (more literally, *over all*) *the glorious things*. The idea is one of joyful contemplation. The tense of the verb re-

joined for all the glorious things that were done by him.

18 'Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

*g* Mat. 13: 31; Ma. 4: 30.

*joined*, denotes the permanency of the joy, which had taken possession of the people.

18-21. The connection of these parables here is not very plain. They were pronounced in Matthew and Mark, on the same occasion in which he pronounced the parable of the sower. The connective *then*, does not quite answer to the original, which is, *and he said* or *was saying*, and perhaps, as Webster and Wilkinson suggest, means "now his discourse on this occasion was the two parables," i. e. they constituted the theme of his discourse on the present occasion. In such a case, however, we should have expected the neuter article in the Greek, as is usual, when a well-known saying or theme of discourse is referred to, by the words with which it commences.

18. *Unto what, &c.* See N. on Matt. 11: 16. *Whereunto shall I resemble it?* See N. on Mark 4: 30.

19, 20. See Ns. on Matt. 13: 31-33. The verbal resemblance between the two passages is very close. What Matthew calls a *tree*, Luke designates a *great tree*, omitting altogether Matthew's additional words, *the greatest of herbs*. Mark has also some slight variations in his reference to the mustard seed, as *the least of all seeds*, but when sown and having sprung up to be a tree, producing *great branches*, so that *under its shadow* the fowls of the air may repose. The grammatical structure of the parable also varies in the three evangelists, showing that no one of the writers was a plagiarist of the others;

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

22 ¶ And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying towards Jerusalem.

*A* Mat. 9: 35; Ma. 6: 6.

but that the accounts were drawn from distinct and independent sources. In regard to the mustard tree, Dr. Thomson (Land and Book vol. i. p. 101) says of the mustard plant, "It may have been perennial, and have grown to a considerable tree, and there are traditions in the country of such so large, that a man could climb into them; and after having seen *red pepper* bushes grown on, year after year, into tall shrubs, and the *castor bean* line the brooks about Damascus, like the willows and the poplars, I can readily credit the existence of mustard trees, large enough to meet all the demands of our Lord's parable." There can be no doubt that, in regard to the size of the tree, our Lord's parable was true to nature. Whether that was the same or a different species, from what is now found in Palestine, may perhaps admit of a question.

22-35. OUR LORD TEACHES AS HE JOURNEYS TOWARDS JERUSALEM. *Perea*. This portion of Luke's Gospel, extending as far as 18: 14, is peculiar to him. Verse 22 denotes the general connection, both local and temporal, of these discourses of our Lord. He was now approaching, evidently by a somewhat circuitous route, the city of Jerusalem, there to finish, by suffering and death, the work given him to do (John 17: 4). On his way, he imparted religious instruction to his disciples and the people, who followed him from place to place, or attended his ministry, as he passed through the towns and villages. The parables which he pronounced

23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

on these occasions, and which are here recorded by Luke, will ever render it one of the richest and most instructive portions of the New Testament.

23. *Then said one, &c.* It is most likely that this person was one of the multitude, whose alarm had been excited by the words of our Lord, and who wished to find some encouragement in the reply to the question which he here proposed. The prospect of his personal salvation would be more or less encouraging, according to the largeness or smallness of the number who would be finally saved. Doddridge suggests that the question may have been proposed by one of the disciples, from motives of mere curiosity, as to the numbers who would enter a kingdom so extensive, as the parables of the mustard-seed and leaven, showed the kingdom of God to be. Bloomfield says that it was a point of dispute in the Jewish schools, whether salvation was to be universal or limited to a few elect. The motives which prompted the question here put to our Lord, will always remain a matter of doubt and conjecture. That it was not a frivolous or supercilious question, or one put from motives of mere curiosity, seems to me to be clear from the reply of Jesus, which makes no allusion to the pride, hypocrisy, or cavilling temper of the man, but is a straightforward and solemn answer, couched, however, according to our Lord's usual manner, in figurative language. *Are there few that be saved?* literally, *are those (now) being saved few?* The present tense confines the question to what was then going on. But the application and scope of the inquiry is to be taken in the widest and most universal sense. Hence the question embraces the idea of ultimate salvation, and is equivalent to *are there few who will (in the end) be saved?* This use of the present tense, to represent a general truth, embracing the past, present, and future,

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24 <sup>a</sup>Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto

<sup>b</sup> Mat. 7: 13. <sup>c</sup> See John 7: 84; & 8: 21; & 18: 33; Ro. 9: 31.

is too common to require proof or illustration. As it regards the kind of salvation here referred to, there can be no doubt that it was spiritual and not temporal. The one who proposed the question may not have been aware of its high spiritual import, but it is fully indicated by our Lord's reply. To suppose the man's question to have referred to deliverance from the Roman yoke, is absurd; for such a deliverance would have included in its beneficial results the whole nation, whereas the question presupposes, that a part only are to be participants of the salvation spoken of. That the question embraced in its terms the whole human family, no one can believe, who recurs to the deep-seated Jewish prejudice against any participation of the Gentiles in the blessings of the Messianic reign. This person, whoever he was, had learned from the lips of Jesus, that the Jewish people were not all to be partakers of the blessings of the kingdom he had come to establish. He had heard enough to show him, that temporal deliverance from the Romans was not the design of our Lord's mission. He very naturally and properly inquires how great a proportion of the nation would participate in the salvation of the gospel; and to his simple and pertinent inquiry, our Lord indirectly but with great earnestness replies, leaving him to judge of the numbers of those who attain salvation, by the immense and continued effort required to enter the precincts of the kingdom of life. *He said unto them, i. e. the multitude.* The answer was of such general interest and importance, that it was addressed to the whole company who were present.

24. This verse is a varied repetition of Matt. 7: 13, on which see Note. The terms are more emphatic in Luke, bringing out fully, not only the implied danger resulting from the wide gate in Matthew, which presents its broad and inviting portals to those who are search-



you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 "When once the master of

m Pa. 32 : 6 ; La. 55 : 6.

ing for the narrow entrance, but the necessity of the most earnest efforts to enter the strait gate, and the danger to be apprehended from delay and inactivity. The word *strive* is an *agonistic* term. It is the word used to denote those extraordinary efforts made by the combatants in the Olympic games, to gain the victory. It is like our expression *strain every nerve*. It denotes the same intense and struggling effort, implied in the violence with which in Matt. 11 : 12, the kingdom of heaven is declared to be taken. Our Lord in thus replying had a twofold purpose, to enable the questioner to draw his own inference of the number of the saved, by the intense struggle with which salvation was to be attained, and to turn his individual attention from questions of less moment, to those pertaining to his own personal salvation. *At the strait gate* ; literally, *through the strait gate*, the idea of a struggle to press through the narrow entrance-way, being the prominent one. In contrast with the large and splendid gateways of oriental towns and cities, Dr. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i. p. 32) says : "I have seen these strait gates and narrow ways, 'with here and there a traveller.' They are in retired corners, and must be sought for, and are opened only to those who knock ; and when the sun goes down, and the night comes on, they are shut and locked." *I say unto you* gives emphasis to the declaration. The sentiment is assumed to be so strange and startling, as to need our Lord's asseveration to its truth, in order that it may be received and acted on by men. *Will seek to enter in*. This is commonly explained as antithetic to the word *strive*, and as referring to the feeble and ill-directed efforts which many persons make to attain salvation, and which are unsuccessful. Doddridge refers it to the importunate entreaties which they will put forth, when they

the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at

\* Mat. 25 : 10.

are excluded. Alford gives this turn, *shall seek to enter* (elsewhere), *and shall not be able*, i. e. there is but one entrance-way to everlasting life, and all who seek to enter by another way, shall be disappointed. In regard to the exposition, which refers the word *seek*, to feeble efforts made to enter before the door is finally shut, it may be objected that this word is generally employed in the New Testament, of diligent and earnest seeking after some object. Among other places, where it is thus used, see Matt. 6 : 33 ; 7 : 7 ; 12 : 43 ; 18 : 12 ; Luke 12 : 29 ; 13 : 6, 7 ; John 5 : 30, 44 ; 7 : 18 ; 8 : 50 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 24 ; Phil. 2 : 21 ; Col. 3 : 1. We cannot, in face of such a use of the word, well refer it to faintness or feebleness of effort, but are forced to employ it in the very contrary sense, of great and earnest desire, manifested however in efforts put forth in the wrong direction, or at the wrong time. May not the last, which is the sense adopted by Doddridge, be the true one ? It seems to be what is demanded by the following context. The words *shall not be able* indicate not the want of effort, but its misapplication by being put forth after the shutting of the door referred to in the next verse. The word *strive* embraces in its general sense, not only great and continued effort, but such timely action, as to avoid being excluded in the way referred to in the following verse. The contrast lies principally in the idea of prompt and energetic effort on the one hand and a fatal procrastination on the other. This brings out with emphasis the NOW, with which all the offers of salvation are made to men in the Word of God : See Isa. 1 : 18 ; Jer. 25 : 5 ; 35 : 15 ; Zech. 1 : 4 ; Luke 14 : 17 ; Rom. 13 : 11 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 2 ; Heb. 4 : 7. It is most unquestionably true, that men are often beguiled to ruin, by mistaking a few vain and feeble efforts for the ener-

the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, 'I know you not whence ye are :

o Ch. 6:46.

getic action requisite to obtain salvation; but that is not here the prominent idea. Our Lord intends to warn men against delaying to enter the strait gate, until it is shut, and they are forever excluded. This will appear more clear from the following verse.

25. *When once*; literally, *from the time*. An important question arises, with what these words are to be connected. As punctuated in our English version, they are to be joined with *then* in v. 26. But is not their natural connection with the preceding, rather than with the following context? The removal of the full stop, with which v. 24 is ended, would give the natural and pertinent connection, *and shall not be able, when once (or after that) the door is shut, &c.* This would denote the time and cause of their final exclusion. The general idea would then be, that immediate and earnest efforts are to be made to enter in at the strait gate, while the door stands open; for soon it will be shut by the Master of the house, and hopeless will be every attempt to enter, however earnestly made. See Matt. 25:11. *Master of the house*. See N. on Matt. 10:25. *Is risen up* from his seat, in order to shut the door. This expresses deliberate forethought and determination. It was not a hasty, unpremeditated act, to be followed by a change of purpose, and a re-opening of the door. There is implied in the expression the idea of previous patience and forbearance, as though the master of the house had waited long for the entrance of the expected guest. The imagery, which at first embraced only the idea of two gates, the one broad (Matt. 7:13), the other narrow, is here somewhat expanded. Reference is had to a feast given by a householder to his friends. At the expiration of the time allotted to the assembling of the guests, he

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

p Mat. 7:23; & 25:12.

arises and shuts the door, as was done at the marriage feast, in Matt. 25:10 (on which see Note), after which act no entrance is allowed to any. *Ye begin to stand*, according to the oriental fulness of construction, is put for *ye shall stand*; or perhaps the idea, "ye shall take to standing without and knocking" (Webster and Wilkinson), is intended to be conveyed by the form of expression. The transition from their careless inactivity to a state of anxiety and alarm, is slightly hinted at in the word *begin*, which is further indicated by the words *begin to say* in v. 26. *Knock at the door*. See N. on Acts 12:13. *Lord, Lord*. See N. on Matt. 25:11. *I know you not*. See N. on Matt. 7:23; 25:12.

26. *We have eaten and drunken in thy presence*. As these persons are supposed to have been his friends and neighbors, they are now represented, as reminding him of the festive occasions, when they ate and drank together, and listened to his public instructions. In this way they seek to prevail on him to open the door for their reception. The terms of this plea for admittance are suited to the relation of Jesus, as a public teacher, to the multitude whom he addressed, with many of whom he had doubtless ate and drank, and been on terms of friendly and social intercourse. This external knowledge and communion with him, was not enough, however, to entitle them to the blessings of salvation. There were other qualifications of an internal nature, such as faith, repentance, love to God and man, hatred to sin, represented here by the entrance through a narrow gate, which if they did not possess, it would be of no avail to refer to external gifts and privileges. *Workers of iniquity*, i. e. evil doers. Their whole occupation was in the service of sin. See N. on Matt. 7:23.

27 'But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; 'depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, 'when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

q Mat. 7: 23; & 25: 41; v. 25. r Pa. 6: 8; Mat. 25: 41. s Mat. 8: 12; & 13: 42; & 24: 51. t Mat. 8: 11.

28, 29. This sentiment is repeated from Matt. 8: 11, 12, on which see Note. Its connection is somewhat different in the present passage. They who by procrastination and inaction, suffer the time of admission to the gospel feast to pass by, will mourn and lament, when they see from afar the banquet of bliss at which are reclining Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and from which they must be forever excluded.

30. Our Lord repeats this declaration at the close of the parable of the "laborers in the vineyard" (Matt. 20: 16, on which see Note). The idea here is that in regard to the gospel feast, there shall be such a reversal of present relations, that many of those who seemed most likely to have been the favored guests, will be excluded; while others, whose prospects for such an honor were far less favorable, will be selected as the recipients. In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, this reversal did not so much refer to the order of condition, as to their being all placed on a perfect equality. The last was then first, by their having received for one hour's labor, as much as was given to those who had worked all day. Here the last are first, in being permitted to enjoy a banquet, from which the others were excluded.

31-33. The incident here recorded is found only in Luke. It is generally supposed, that these Pharisees had been sent by Herod with this threatening message, in order to drive him from his dominions, as a person likely

29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 "And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

31 ¶ The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and de-

u Mat. 19: 30; & 20: 16; Ma. 10: 31.

to excite a sedition and thus furnish him trouble. That Herod did not really wish to kill Jesus, is seen from the fact of his desiring to see him (9: 7-9), and abstaining from putting him to death when he was fully in his power (see 23: 6-12). He had probably suffered enough from the stings of conscience in putting John the Baptist to death, without imbruing his hands in the blood of another religious teacher. Webster and Wilkinson refer to our Lord's discourse in regard to the law of divorce (Matt. 19: 1-3), which may have been repeated to Herod, and awakened his resentment by its touching his own case. There are some interpreters, however, who think that this report of the Pharisees was a sheer fabrication, in order to frighten Jesus away from Herod's territory, and hasten him to Jerusalem, to meet the doom which they knew to await him there. Stier suggests, as an additional reason, the design of testing Jesus, whether he was accessible to fear. If this were so, it was indeed a crafty scheme, since the least fear on his part would have lowered him in the estimation of the people, and, to an equal extent, raised the courage of his enemies. *Get thee out* of this part of the country. The next clause, *depart thence*, is added by way of emphasis, as though they had said: 'Hurry away from this region. Linger not a moment in these parts.' The word *will*, in *will kill*, is not the simple auxiliary, but is a verb itself, signifying, *to will, wish, desire*,

part hence; for Herod will kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to

and denotes action, choice, and purpose. It may be rendered *purposes to kill thee*.

32. *Go ye*. You say to me, *Get thee out and depart hence*. I say in return to you, *Go ye*. The antithesis evinces the steadfastness and fearlessness of his purpose to remain in the region, until he had finished his prescribed work. He returns the word they had addressed to him, thus showing that it was not for *him* to turn aside from his prescribed course of action, but for *them* to finish the work which they had taken upon themselves, by carrying his message to Herod. *That fox*. This is generally understood as referring to the crafty effort of Herod, to drive Jesus from the country over which he ruled. Simonius thinks this appellation had been given Herod by the people. But those who adopt the view that this reported threat of Herod was a fabrication of these Pharisees, take the words of Jesus in an ironical sense, the word *fox*, being ostensibly applied to Herod, but in reality designating the crafty effort of the Pharisees to effect his ruin or at least his disgrace, by this false report. Such is the opinion of Stier and Olshausen, who refer to the respectful bearing of Jesus on all occasions to the civil rulers, which forbids his applying this opprobrious term directly to Herod, who was the ruler of Galilee, his own country. But if the threat was only the coinage of their own deceitful counsel, then in ironically assuming that they told the truth, and in applying to Herod the term *fox*, he gave them to understand, that he was well acquainted with their artifices, and fox-like character. '*Go tell that fox*. Take this answer to your insidious cunning proposal. Think not that your craftiness is concealed from me.' *Behold I cast out, &c.* There is much diversity of opinion in regard to

day and to morrow, and the third day \* I shall be perfected.

33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the

see He. 2:10.

the meaning of this passage. The view generally adopted makes it a sort of conciliatory reply, that he would soon leave Galilee, and thus rid Herod of his fears. Such an interpretation demands, that we shall take the designations of time here, as literally applicable to his three days' journey from the place, where he then was, to Bethany or Jerusalem. But this is too tame and frigid an exposition, to suit the condensed energy and determination indicated by the reply. Nor does it comport with the following assertion, that a prophet could not perish elsewhere than in Jerusalem. I prefer therefore this as the interpretation, that our Lord has his appointed work to perform, and time wherein to accomplish it, which it was not in Herod's power to prevent, or cut short. The expression is a proverbial one, these specific designations of time being intended to denote an indefinitely short but uninterrupted and continuous period. "It is perfectly parallel with John 11:9, 10, and says—I have my appointed time, in which I can continue to walk and act, fearless and undisturbed." Stier. The work which remained for our Lord to accomplish was twofold, to attest his mission by miraculous works, and to finish it by his death on the cross. That the words, *I shall be perfected*, do not refer to bringing his works to a close on the third day, but to his death, there can be no doubt. Indeed it is implied in the words, "it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." To interpret this of his preparatory work, is contradicted by the facts of the case; as it was more than three days to the time when he closed his public ministry, by taking his final leave of the temple, as recorded in Matt. 24:1; Mark 13:1.

33. *Nevertheless I must walk, &c.* The connection is somewhat obscure,

day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

but in the light of the previous exposition, we may consider it to be this: 'Such being my allotted course, so soon to be perfected by my death, it behooves me to proceed with the work committed to me, without any interruption or delay.' The great difficulty is in harmonizing the expression *the day following*, with the preceding words, *the third day I shall be perfected*, to which they seem to correspond. But a close examination of the passage will show, that the correspondence is one of appearance and not of reality. The words *the day following*, are not the equivalent of *the third day* in the preceding verse, but have the signification and so on, referring to indefinite but continuous time in the future. The general idea is, that his work must be continued, day after day, uninterruptedly to its close, and he felt assured of doing it in safety, notwithstanding Herod's threats. In this assurance of safety while in Galilee, he is confirmed by a well-known truth, that it is impossible for a prophet to perish out of Jerusalem. Such is the general sentiment and connection of thought. It is the expression of a calm reliance upon the protection of his Father, and his assurance that his life will not be seriously imperilled until he goes to Jerusalem. Burton well expresses it: "Tell Herod that I shall be employed some time longer in the work of my ministry; after which I shall be put to death; but my ministry will not be interrupted by Herod; I shall finish it in spite of him, and after all shall not be put to death in Galilee, but in Jerusalem." The verb *must walk*, conforms to the itinerant ministry of Jesus, and is equivalent to, *I must proceed from place to place* in the fulfilment of my prescribed duties. *It cannot be*, &c. This is based on the fact, that it was the province of the Jewish Sanhedrim to decide upon the claims of a prophet. If, upon examination, he was adjudged to be a false prophet, sentence of condemnation was passed upon him; and

84 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and

y Mat. 23: 37.

until the power of capital punishment was taken from this court by the Romans, the criminal, in pursuance of the decree, was led to execution. Josephus (Antiq. XIV. 9. § 3) reports Herod, Antipater's son, as being charged with transgressing the law, in putting Hezekias to death, inasmuch as it forbade to slay any man, even though he were a wicked person, until he had been first condemned to suffer death by the Sanhedrim. But reference to Jerusalem, as the place where this supreme court was held, and where all capital offences were to be tried and punished, is not the only or principal thing here intended. Jerusalem had a preëminence of another sort, to which a deep allusion is here made. The word rendered *it cannot be*, in the original, does not refer to what is naturally impossible, as opposed to the laws of nature or of civil government, but something which is inadmissible, or must not be allowed in the nature of things. In this sense it is used here. It was not in the nature of things, as seen in the history of the past, and confirmed by the present attitude which Jerusalem had taken in regard to our Lord's mission, that he could perish out of that wicked city. It was there that the most powerful and malignant enemies of truth resided. That was the centre and source of all the bitter opposition, which had been made to his ministry. This was in keeping with the previous history of this highly favored but guilty city. She had from the very beginning killed the prophets, who had been successively sent to warn her of impending judgments; and now she was preparing to add the crowning act to her infamous notoriety, by putting to death the Lord of Life and Glory. It was morally impossible, therefore, that this threat of Herod could be carried into execution, when Jerusalem was so nigh, and its chief citizens so disposed to add Him to the number of God's prophets who had been previously slain there. John the Baptist has been adduced as an instance

stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth* gather her brood under *her* wings, and ye would not!

• La. 26: 31, 32; Pa. 69: 25; Ia. 1: 7; Da. 9: 27; Mt. 8: 12.

of a prophet who perished out of Jerusalem; but his case is evidently an exception which, so far as we know, stands alone in the whole history of the Jewish prophets. Besides this, it may be remarked that John's official duties did not lead him to Jerusalem. Had it been so, we can hardly doubt, that Herod's bloody act would have been anticipated by the murder of this prophet at Jerusalem. There is no necessity, however, of pressing our Lord's words to an absolute denial that any Jewish prophets were put to death, save in the metropolis of the nation. If not literally true in every instance, it was so generally so; that the inference was very properly drawn by our Lord, that no prophet could perish out of that guilty city.

34, 35. See Ns. on Matt. 23: 37-39. This apostrophic lamentation seems here to have been suggested by the word *Jerusalem*, which he had just named as the place where all the prophets had perished. It is strange that any expositors should suppose that Luke incorporated these words here, while in reality they were spoken only on that solemn occasion referred to in Matthew, as above cited. There is no reason, whatever, to doubt that they were spoken at this very time. It is no objection that our Lord was in Perea, when he thus apostrophized the city. It was before his mind as vividly on this occasion, as when he afterwards apostrophized it in the same words, while he stood within its walls (Matt. 23: 37); or from Mount Olivet beheld the city and wept over it (Luke 19: 21). His prophetic eye rested upon the awful doom to which it was reserved, and he breaks forth into this lamentation, which he afterward repeated, as recorded by Matthew. The

35 Behold, 'your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

• Pa. 118: 26; Mat. 21: 9; Ma. 11: 10; ch. 19: 38; John 12: 13.

word *henceforth* in Matthew, is here omitted, because he was not as then to take his immediate departure. Some would take the words, *blessed is he that cometh*, as having their fulfilment in his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, not remembering that in Matthew they were uttered *after* that event (see Matt. 23: 37-39). Stier seeks to avoid this by referring the words in Matthew to a joyful greeting in the far distant futurity, of which the expression in Luke, which has primary reference to his triumphal entry into the city, is the type. But I cannot persuade myself that the passage in both evangelists does not refer to one and the same event. What that event is, I have endeavored to point out in my Note on Matt. 23: 39.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

1-24. OUR LORD DINES WITH A CHIEF PHARISEE ON THE SABBATH. *Perea*. The incidents here related are supposed by Dr. Robinson, and the best harmonists, to have taken place on his last journey to Jerusalem. The fact that our Lord seems here to have leisure for visiting houses and imparting instruction, leads Stier to doubt, whether this portion of Luke, together with chaps. xv. and xvi., can be assigned to a later period of the last journey to Jerusalem, than chaps. xi. and xii. But in view of what our Lord himself says (13: 33), we are not obliged to make his journey to Jerusalem one of such haste, that he had no leisure to perform miracles, impart instruction, and partake of the proffered hospitalities of those who chose to entertain him. The natural interpretation also of 13: 22, would forbid our attaching such haste to his journey, as Stier appears to do. We find that

## CHAPTER XIV.

AND it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the

when he had progressed on his way so far even as Jericho, he accepted the hospitalities of Zaccheus. It is quite evident from John 12 : 12, that he spent the next night at Bethany. Thus in the stages of his journey nearest to Jerusalem, he preserved that calm dignity and fearless determination, which is the proper mean between undue haste and tardiness of movement. I cannot doubt, therefore, that these chapters (xiv.-xvi.) have the very position in our Lord's last journey to Jerusalem, which Luke has here assigned them, and that he pursued his way leisurely, but uninterruptedly, to the final scene of his earthly labors.

1. *It came to pass*, i. e. the incidents here related took place. *One of the chief Pharisees*. The word in the original leaves us in doubt, whether this Pharisee was a member of the Sanhedrim, as the word is employed in 23 : 18, or a ruler of the synagogue, as in Matt. 9 : 18. Grotius adopts the former view ; Stier and other more recent interpreters, the latter opinion. The point is immaterial. *To eat bread*, i. e. to take food. See N. on Matt. 15 : 2 (end). There is abundance of evidence from the Rabbinical writings, that the Jews made feasts and gave entertainments on the sabbath day. See Neh. 8 : 9-12, and also Tobit 2 : 1. It appears from the parables which were spoken on this occasion, and doubtless suggested by it, that the present entertainment was of no ordinary kind. See N. on v. 12. *Are they*. The original is emphatic. *These very persons*, the Pharisees just mentioned, many of whom were no doubt present on this occasion, and *were watching* him from his very entrance into the house, to find something of which they might accuse him. It was with this insidious, treacherous design, doubtless, that he had been invited by this Pharisee; for

sabbath day, that they watched him.

2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

we cannot suppose that it was with friendly intent, after the woes, narrated in 11 : 42-54, had been pronounced against them. But Jesus fearlessly accepted the invitation, and suffered the contradiction of those bad men (Heb. 12 : 3), in order that he might oppose to their hatred and treachery the influence of truth. He neglected no opportunity to correct and reclaim the vilest of men. If he ate with publicans and sinners, in order the better to gain access to their hearts and consciences, he did the same with the other extreme of society, the proud, self-righteous, hypocritical Pharisees. Thus in the highest sense he became all things to all men (1 Cor. 9 : 22), in order that he might advance the interests of the kingdom he was establishing.

2. *Behold* prepares the way for the somewhat extraordinary incident, which is here to be related. *Before him*. He was not an invited guest, as is evident from v. 4; and hence, unless all this took place, while the guests were assembling, and before they sat down to the meal, we must suppose him to have taken some position, where he hoped to gain the benignant attention of Jesus and be cured. He did not dare openly to ask this boon, through fear of the Pharisees, inasmuch as it was the sabbath day. But he hoped his appearance might excite the compassion of Jesus, and that he would heal him of his own accord. There is no evidence, as Stier thinks, that this man was placed here purposely by the Pharisees, in order that he might be the means of entrapping Jesus. The whole scene seems to have been divinely ordered and arranged, to impress these proud, malignant, and hypocritical men, with a sense of his power, and prepare the way for the high tone of authority with which he addressed them on this occasion. It is worthy of note, that

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?"

4 And they held their peace.

a Mat. 12: 10.

although he was surrounded by these virulent enemies, who had insidiously invited him to this feast, they appear to have listened to his remarks in the profoundest silence, not daring to interrupt him with their usual captious and ensnaring questions. That this was in part at least the result of the awe inspired by this miracle, there can be hardly a doubt. To suppose our Lord also to heal a man, in whom not only was no faith, but positive unbelief, as seen by his complicity with the Pharisees in suffering himself to be used for their base ends, would render this miracle unlike any other which our Lord is recorded to have wrought, since in every instance he required faith as a prerequisite to the cure. I am fully persuaded, therefore, that the man came there with the honest intention of evoking the pity of our Lord, and with a faith so strong, that to the omniscient eye of Christ, he appeared to be a proper subject of his healing mercy, without the usual demand upon the open expression of his belief in the power of Jesus to heal.

3. Our Lord, from previous conversations, knew to what extreme and hypocritical lengths the Pharisees carried their notions in regard to the observance of the sabbath, and therefore answering to their thoughts, he himself proposes the question in regard to the lawfulness of healing on the sabbath day. His question is the same as theirs on a previous occasion (Matt. 12: 10), but with different intent. He evidently anticipated the question which was in their heart, and which probably would have found utterance, had he not, by his apt and timely illustration (v. 5), put them to silence and shame. "There are many such questions, the mere proposal of which puts all gainsayers to silence, which we ourselves need only

And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go;

5 And answered them, saying, 'Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will

b Ex. 23: 5: De. 22: 4; ch. 13: 15.

to propose, if we have also the simplicity of victorious truth on our side." Stier. *The lawyers and Pharisees*. "The classification of the two under one article, corroborates the opinion, that the Pharisees formed a profession as well as party: see Mark 11: 15." Webster and Wilkinson.

4. *They held their peace*. On the one hand, they could not deny the lawful performance on the sabbath of so benevolent an act as the one here proposed; and on the other, they were fearful of compromising themselves with him in some way, if they replied in the affirmative. Hence they prudently kept silence. *He took him, &c.* Literally, *having laid hold of him he healed him*. He put himself in physical contact with the man, according to his usual custom, in order that the act of healing might be palpable, as proceeding from him. See N. on Matt. 8: 3. There is a striking antithesis between their heartless silence in regard to the cure of the man, and the readiness with which Jesus exerted his power to heal him.

5. *And answered them, saying; literally, and answering them said*. His reply, as in v. 3, was to the thoughts which were passing through their mind. See N. on Matt. 11: 25, 26. *Which of you, &c.* See N. on Matt. 12: 11, where the argument *a fortiori* (see N. on Matt. 5: 15) is fully expressed, but is left here to be mentally supplied. What in Matthew was a *sheep*, is here an *ass* or an *ox*, which is a comprehensive expression for all kinds of domestic animals. See Ex. 20: 17; Isa. 1: 3. *Straightway*. Without hesitation or delay. *Pull him out*. To do this would require the united effort of several persons, and the verb is one expressive of great labor and painstaking. The argument is to be rendered complete, by mentally



not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 ¶ And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose

supplying after this verse, from Matt. 12: 12, "how much then is a man better than an ass or an ox? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days."

6. *Could not answer.* To the question in v. 3, they *would* not reply; here they cannot reply. They have not the candor, however, to admit the truth of his reasoning, and maintain a profound and dogged silence.

7-24. Our Lord now proceeds to pronounce three parables, suggested, doubtless, by what fell under his observation, as he dined at the table of the chief Pharisee. The first comprises vs. 7-11, and refers to the conduct of those who are invited to a feast. It was suggested, as we are told in v. 7, by the eagerness with which the guests on this occasion sought the chief reclining places at the table. The second parable is included in vs. 12-14, and is directed against the selfishness of inviting those only to feasts, who are able to give entertainments in return. The third, embraced in vs. 16-24, is designed to correct the idea tacitly thrown out in v. 15, that it was the prerogative of the whole Jewish nation, to be partakers of the blessings of the Messianic kingdom. Our Lord avers that so far from being true is this assumption, the whole of those persons to whom these blessings, represented under the figure of a feast, were first proffered, excused themselves from the entertainment, and were therefore self-debarred from the kingdom of God. All these parables contain important truths, which will be more fully noticed, in the particular comments which follow.

7. *To those which were bidden*, i. e. having relation to the conduct of such as are bidden to an entertainment. At the same time his words were address-

ed directly to the guests assembled on the present occasion. *When he marked*; literally, *directing* (his attention) to. Some less correctly supply the ellipsis, so as to read, *casting* (his eyes) upon. Expositors note the contrast between this, and the words *they watched him*, in v. 1. They did it for a malignant purpose, but he, in order to correct their faults, and to uncover to them the pride and selfishness of their heart, by exposing the errors of their external deportment. We must guard against supposing, that our Lord had no higher object in view than to correct their external manners. These were of importance, but principally as being the index of the disposition within. *Chose out*. It would appear from this parable, that in those days, the guests selected and secured their respective seats at the table. Among all well-bred people of our day, the seats are assigned each individual guest, by the master or mistress of the feast. *The chief rooms*. In Matt. 23: 6, *uppermost rooms*, on which see Note. These chief reclining places at the feast, had been eagerly sought by the guests who were then present. This conduct of theirs our Lord had marked, and hence the parable.

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding; sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him;

8. *Thou*. The singular pronoun is employed to give directness and emphasis to the address. No one should refer it solely to the master of the feast, or to one who sat nearest our Lord, or to some one who had manifested unusual eagerness to gain the highest place. It is the representative pronoun for the whole company, whom Jesus addressed, as is evident from v. 7. It imparted directness and emphasis to address the whole company, as though each one were singled out as the person especially referred to. *Of any man*, whether an intimate friend in whose

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 'But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade

o Pr. 25 : 6, 7.

house you feel free from all restraint; or a comparative stranger, with whom your relations are yet ceremonious. The maxim here laid down, is to be practised on all occasions. *A wedding*; literally, *a marriage-feast*. See N. on Matt. 22 : 2. It is representative here of any feast, to which numerous guests are invited. *Sit not down* is to be explained of their custom of reclining at meals. *In the highest room*, i. e. the chief reclining place, or couch reserved for the principal guest. This was the middle one on the *triclinium* or couch, at the upper end of the table. See N. on Matt. 23 : 6.

9. *And him*, i. e. the more honorable guest. He is represented here as coming in last, when all the company were already assembled. This feature in the attendance of great men at feasts and public assemblages, is a familiar one at the present day, it being considered as essential to the respect due to those in eminent station, that the company shall be assembled and in readiness to receive them. *Give this man place*, i. e. yield up to him the chief reclining place, as a guest more worthy of the honor than thyself. *Begin to take* denotes the process of the act referred to. It pictures before the mind the person, thus unceremoniously ousted from his conspicuous position, as rising reluctantly in the presence of the guests, and proceeding to the most humble seat at the table. *With shame* at this degradation in the eyes of the assembled guests. *Lowest room*. The least honorable seat at the table. All the higher and more inviting seats were already occupied. No seat was therefore vacant for his use, except the one fur-

thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 'For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he

d Job 23 : 29; Pa. 18 : 27; Pr. 29 : 23; Mat. 23 : 12; ch. 18 : 14; Ja. 4 : 6; 1 Pa. 5 : 5.

thest removed from the head of the table. This is to be considered in explanation of this feature of the parable. He was not told by the master of the feast to take the lowest seat, but he did this from necessity.

10. *Go and sit down*, &c. This direction has no reference to that mock humility, which takes the lowest seat, in order that the eyes of the whole company may be directed to the efforts of the master of the feast, to prevail upon the person who does thus, to go up higher. There is no greater evidence of pride, than such an overdoing of humility. But our Lord refers here, as in Matt. 23 : 12, and elsewhere, to the general principle of avoiding all efforts to take precedence of others, and of taking such positions as would rather be regarded below than above our deserts. *Then*; literally, *so that*, denoting the consequence of the act. See N. on Matt. 1 : 22. *Worship*, i. e. honor, praise, respect. Our Lord here teaches, that it is right to strive for the good opinion of our fellow-men. He who is regardless of the estimation in which he is held by others, unless that estimation is to be obtained at the sacrifice of truth and integrity, gives the highest evidence, that he is unworthy of public esteem. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," Prov. 22 : 1. *In the presence*, in the sight and estimation.

11. This verse is found in Matt. 23 : 12, on which see Note. It was an adage employed by our Lord doubtless on many occasions. Its connection here with the preceding context is obvious. What is rendered of special application in the parable or illustration just put

that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy

friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.

forth, is here expanded to a general principle. There can be no doubt that our Lord here conducts us to the higher spiritual sense, in which true self abasement and humility will meet their reward, at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

12. Our Lord now addresses himself particularly to his host, the preceding parable having been spoken to the guests (see v. 7). Perhaps Jesus had seen in him a desire to ingratiate himself with the more honorable persons of the company, by paying them marked respect, while those of more humble rank, were comparatively unnoticed. The direction of our Lord is aimed at every attempt to curry favor with the great, and unfolds the true principle on which feasts and entertainments should be given. But while the master of the feast was specially addressed, yet as *thou* in v. 8, stood collectively for the whole company, so here the words of our Lord contained a principle, applicable and intended for all. *Dinner or supper*. The latter was the principal meal, although the former was prepared at times with great luxury and splendor. Both words are to be taken here, evidently, in the sense of a special entertainment, answering to the banquet or feast referred to in v. 13. See 5 : 29. *Call not*, &c. The verb is not the one employed in v. 13, but is one whose signification is to *speak* or *shout aloud*, and seems clearly to refer to the loud and pompous summons, with which the great were invited to these splendid entertainments. As it regards the direction here given, it is not to be interpreted as a literal and invariable rule, since in that case it would forbid our ever inviting relatives, or special friends to an entertainment, a prohibition repulsive to the first principles of our nature. Nor could a neighbor even partake of our friendly hospitality, provided he

was rich, or of honorable station in society. But the sentiment is simply this, that we are not to lavish our attentions upon those only, from whom we may expect some favor in return, which is the very essence of selfishness, but are to expend them upon those rather whose condition in life forbids the hope that they can ever repay our kind attention. Doddridge well expresses it: "Invite not so much thy rich friends, or thy brethren, or thy kindred, or neighbors, lest they should invite you again, and thus a recompense be made thee, and all thou hast in return be to receive one banquet for another." Our Lord doubtless saw indications of this selfish spirit in the person who had invited him on this occasion, which called forth this rebuke. This balances and harmonizes the two parables, the former having been spoken in view of the eager desire, with which the guests sought the chief reclining places at the feast; the latter, in view of the evidence furnished by the wealth and standing of those present, that the host had invited them only, who had the ability to prepare a like entertainment in return. *Thy friends, nor thy brethren*, &c. No particular stress should be laid on the distinction and gradation of these terms, their use being simply to denote in a comprehensive way, the higher classes of society, to which the person himself belonged. They are here opposed to the lowest and most abject persons, in order to make the contrast striking, and intensify the force of the direction. Our Lord was probably conversant with the fact here implied, that on the present occasion, the guests were composed mostly if not altogether of persons, who sustained these very relations to the Pharisee, who gave the entertainment. *Neighbors*, perhaps in the Jewish sense of the term. See N. on Matt. 5 : 43. The epithet *rich*, how-

13 But when thou makest a feast, call 'the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind :

14 And thou shalt be blessed ;

ε Ne. 8 : 10, 12.

ever, renders its introduction to the parable natural and impressive. *Lest they also bid thee again*, "and thou shouldst thus seek to possess thy wrong recompense. This *lest* is precisely the same as in v. 8. For the temporal recompense is to be feared and avoided similarly with the humiliation in the former case." Stier. *Recompense*; literally, *a giving back, a requital*, on the principle of repayment of entertainments.

13. *A feast*; literally, *a reception*, and hence a general entertainment, feast, or banquet. The same word is employed in Luke 5 : 29. Dr. Jahn thinks that our Lord alludes to the festival of the second sort of first fruits (or the feast of weeks), of which, according to the Mosaic law (Deut. 16 : 11-14), servants, widows, orphans, and Levites, were to be made free partakers. The custom now prevalent with some families, and which it were desirable to be more general, of sending on thanksgiving and other public festivals, portions to the poor, is founded on this great law of kindness, and serves to promote the general purpose of the feast, by enabling the poor also to rejoice before God, and offer with the rich their united thanksgiving to our common Lord and Benefactor. *Call*, not in the noisy, pompous manner in which the rich and honorable are invited, to draw public attention to the great feast which you are about to give, but in a more quiet, unobtrusive, and private way, comporting with the true spirit of humility and lowliness of heart, with which, as stewards of God's gifts, you are to dispense the things committed to you, among the poor and despised of the earth. Such I regard to be the obvious sense of the two verbs, rendered in our common version alike by the word *call*, but which in the original have a marked difference of signification.

for they cannot recompense thee : for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these

14. *For they cannot, &c.* This is the condition on which the blessedness spoken of is to be bestowed. The cause of happiness is contained in the next clause, which begins with a different Greek connective. The idea is : "because, though they cannot recompense thee, thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." The expression *resurrection of the just* is regarded by Alford, as synonymous with the first resurrection, synchronizing with the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19 : 9), at which time, the good are to be judged (in reference to which, see my Note on Matt. 25 : 32), otherwise the words of *the just*, would be "vapid and unmeaning." But are not the words of *the just*, added very properly to show to which of the two great classes of mankind, the *just* or the *unjust*, the person here spoken of would belong? So Stier with his usual critical tact and good judgment interprets : "These words contain merely an intimation, that only the righteous will rise to a *blessed* resurrection of *recompense*; as we understand also in John, 5 : 29, the resurrection of life." As it regards the question, whether the good and bad shall be raised simultaneously, at the last day, or whether the resurrection of the former shall precede that of the latter, no definite revelation has been made to us. In several scriptures it appears, however, to be strongly implied, that the pious dead will be raised first, not to be judged before the wicked—which would be directly in face of that great description of the judgment in Matt. 25 : 31-46—but as anticipatory of their future blessedness, and a sort of first fruits of their subsequent triumph and glory. See 1 Cor. 15 : 20-23; 1 Thes. 4 : 16, 17; Rev. 20 : 4-6.

15. There has been much diversity of opinion, as to what gave rise to the

things, he said unto him, 'Bless-

/ Re. 19: 9.

words spoken by this person. Alford thinks that he employed the words *shall eat bread*, literally, in reference to the great feast, to which the Jews looked forward, and the admission to which he, as a Jew, regarded as a thing sure and certain. Olshausen refers the preceding "resurrection of the just," to the Messianic reign on earth, when the Jews hoped to live in peace, along with the risen saints of the Old Testament, and all things should be restored to their original condition. In view of this glorious epoch, the guest called out in a transport of joy, including himself as a sharer in the scene of blessedness, "happy is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." There is no essential difference in the exposition of Alford and Olshausen, whose theory of eschatology, as we have remarked (Note on Matt. 25: 32), does not materially differ, and is based on a misconception of the whole subject. There is to be but one judgment for the righteous and the wicked, which is to precede the Messianic reign in its full glory and perpetuity, although the conflict by which the reign of darkness and death is to be terminated, and the Messiah's kingdom to be established, takes place on earth. Although this Jew, therefore, understood our Lord, most unquestionably, in the sense above referred to of a Messianic reign on earth, yet he did not, as Olshausen intimates, understand him *correctly*, but with all the gross mistaken notions of the Jews of that age. It was to correct this very idea of a great temporal epoch of national prosperity and splendor, of which every lineal descendant of Abraham would participate, that our Lord pronounced the following parable; showing most clearly that they, whose claims seemed to be first to the privileges of the feast, and who were first invited, perversely rejected the invitation and forfeited the blessings which were in consequence bestowed upon those, who seemed most unlikely to be the recipients of the favor. If this

ed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

shows, as it clearly does, that the Jewish idea that the Messiah's reign would be for their benefit alone was a false one, does it not by a parity of reasoning, as clearly show, that Messiah's reign was not earthly and temporal, but spiritual and eternal? I am inclined to think, therefore, that this guest, at the mention of the words, "thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just," broke out in the exclamation here recorded, either because his mind had been excited to an unusual desire for the approach of this time, when all the virtues of humility, condescension, and kindness, would be in exercise; or because he wished to draw out our Lord on this topic, which came home to the heart of every Jew, who believed in a coming Messiah. The reply of Jesus is corrective of their false notions in regard to the kingdom of God, and not one of reproof, indicating that the interruption was ill-timed and frivolous. I cannot, therefore, quite agree with Stier, that this man spake without any particular aim or purpose, wishing to redeem the rest of the company from their utter silence, or to put an end to the intense spirit of moralizing, which characterized the discourse of Jesus, by something benignant of his own. Why may we not suppose that the words of our Lord had reached and affected his heart, with a sense of the happiness of those who should be partakers of the Messianic blessings? We are not of necessity to conclude that he became a follower of Jesus, or that his mind was illuminated from above to discern in him his Messianic Lord; but the circumstances of the case forbid our regarding him as a "prattler about the heavenly table" (Stier), or as uttering words with the general design of ensnaring Jesus. That his ejaculation indicated mistaken views of the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, is very evident; and it was to set him and the rest of the company right upon this subject, that the following parable of

16 'Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

the marriage supper was pronounced. On the nature of the phrase *kingdom of God*, see N. on Matt. 3: 2.

16-24. This parable, as has been remarked, is a reply to the preceding ejaculation of the guest. It is as though our Lord had said: 'Sayest thou so? See how the Jewish nation receives the invitation to partake of the blessedness of this kingdom.' The points of resemblance, which this parable has with the one afterwards pronounced by our Lord, and recorded in Matt. 22: 1-14, are so close and numerous, that for verbal explanations the reader is referred to my comments on that passage. The terms in which the invitation is here refused, are less discourteous than in Matthew, the malignant opposition of his enemies being not yet so thoroughly aroused, as in the last days of his ministry, or the Pharisees of Perea, not having reached the measure of active hostility to Jesus, which characterized their brethren at Jerusalem. The penalty too of those who refused the invitation in Matthew, was death, and the total destruction of their city; while here, it is their rejection from the feast (v. 24). In Matthew, the parable is carried onward to the banquet-hall, and the inquisition into the character of the guests, and the dreadful doom of those who are not arrayed in the wedding-garment, are delineated. All this shows that the character of those to whom it was spoken in Matthew, was changed for the worse, and that the parable was adapted, on both occasions, to the actual condition of his hearers. Some nicer points of resemblance and dissimilarity will be noticed, as we proceed in our exposition.

16. *A certain man*. In Matthew, *a king*. Christ's kingly dignity was there brought out, especially in the capital punishment visited upon those who refused his invitation to the feast, and upon the guest who had come unprovided with the wedding-garment. *A great supper*. Here also in Matthew,

17 And <sup>1</sup>sent his servant at supper time to say to them that  
g Mat. 22: 2. A Pr. 9: 2, 5.

the corresponding words, *a marriage-feast for his son*, show an advance on the dignity of the present feast. The person in Matthew was of kingly rank, and the feast was given on no less occasion than the marriage of his son. In regard to the word *supper*, our use of the term is apt to mislead us. The principal meal with the Jews, as well as with the Greeks and Romans, was at the close of the day, when the heat was mitigated by the evening breeze, and there was abundance of leisure to satisfy the appetite and indulge in social converse. These suppers were often prolonged to a late hour, and with the Romans especially were often the occasion of great licentiousness and excess. *And bade many*. An evidence that the feast was great and expensive, and making the conduct of those who refused attendance more inexcusable. This invitation was the one given some time previous to the feast, in order that the persons invited might be in a state of readiness to attend, when the entertainment was fully prepared. This feature also added to the criminality of those, who although receiving a timely invitation, yet suffered themselves to be so engrossed with cares and labors, as to have no time to attend the feast.

17. *Sent his servant*. In Matthew, *servants*, the royal banquet being in this respect superior to the supper given by this householder (v. 21), in that many servants were employed in extending the invitations to the feast. In its application to the messages of God to his people by the mouth of the prophets, *servant* is to be taken in a collective sense; or, as Stier remarks, it is "*the calling voice of God*, as uttered through all his messengers." The summons both here and in Matthew, is the one sent forth to announce, that the supper was now in a state of readiness, the general invitation having been previously given, so that all the guests might be in a state of readiness to come, on the reception of the second and final summons.

were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must

needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

See N. on Matt. 22: 3. Dr. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i. p. 178) says that in Lebanon, this custom still prevails. "If a sheikh, bey, or emeer invites, he always sends a servant to call you at the time appointed. The servant often repeats the very formula mentioned in Luke 14: 17—'Come, for the supper is ready.' The fact that this custom is mainly confined to the wealthy and to the nobility, is in strict agreement with the parable, where the certain man who made the great supper, and bade many, is supposed to be of this class. It is true now, as then, that to refuse is a high insult to the maker of the feast.—It is pleasant to find enough of the drapery of this parable still practised to show that originally it was in all its details, in close conformity to the customs of this country." *At supper-time*; literally, *at the hour of supper*. The preparations were in such a state of readiness, as to now admit of no delay. *Come, for all things, &c.* The feast was now prepared, and all things were ready for the entertainment of the guests. See Matt. 22: 4, where there is a more particular statement of the readiness of the preparations.

18. *With one consent*. Our translators would have done better, had they supplied *spirit* or *accord*. There was the same temper of mind manifested in the various excuses, which these persons made. They all exhibited an utter contempt for the honor done them, and showed their preference to things of comparatively trivial importance, at least in the spiritual application of the supper to the gospel-feast. *The first said, &c.* It is to be noticed how these excuses are progressively disrespectful. This first excuse is alleged to be founded on necessity, *I must needs go, &c.* The second claims no such ne-

cessity, but is expressed in *I go*, denoting mere will or purpose. The third is blunt and decided, *I cannot come*. Alford notices this, and the similarity between the objects of pursuit here referred to, and those in Matt. 22: 5. It is also to be noticed, that the first and second excuses have regard to the possession of property and the claims of business, the third, to that of pleasure; the first is based on the desire of wealth and gain, the last, on that of ease and enjoyment. The difference between the first two, is rather in form than in essence, the former being more general in its application, the latter, more special and particular; *that* is property in mere inactive possession, *this* is property employed in active business. Perhaps the two classes of business are referred to, which are more particularly brought to view in the corresponding portion of the parable in Matt. 22: 5. It would not be irrelevant to the design of the parable, which evidently includes all who excuse themselves from obeying the gospel message, to refer the first excuse to the votaries of wealth in its quiet enjoyment; the second, to those who live in the excitement of business; the third, to the devotees of pleasure. *I must needs go*; literally, *I am under the necessity of going away from home*. So with us, the being obliged to go from home, would be regarded as one of the most valid and reasonable excuses for not attending a festive entertainment.

19. *Five yoke of oxen*. The number has no special significancy, being chosen to give definiteness to the parable, and also to show, that the value of the purchase was adduced as a reason why it should not be neglected for an occasion of festivity. *Yoke*, as at the present day, is put for a *pair*. *To prove*, i. e. to test their strength, endurance, and docility.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and

lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and

20. "This excuse points out the attractions and absorptions of domestic enjoyment and comfort. In this case, the force of the temptation lies in the difficulty of reconciling conflicting duties, as is seen in the greater peremptoriness of the refusal. Attendance on the feast did not entail the violation of any duty arising out of his new relation, but simply the holding it of inferior importance on a given occasion." Webster and Wilkinson.

21. Being wholly unsuccessful, the servant returned and reported these excuses and refusals to his lord. The supper was prepared. Food had been provided in abundance. It must not be wasted through want of guests. Every seat must be filled, and the servant is directed, therefore, to go forth and extend the invitation to the classes, who were to be found in the streets and lanes of the city, not overlooking the poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind. Here the parable enforces and illustrates the direction given in v. 13, and shows that in the offers of grace, the same general principle is observed by God, which is enjoined upon men. *Quickly*. The feast was in such a state of readiness, as to admit of no delay. *Streets and lanes*, i. e. the broad and narrow streets or alleys. It is evident here, as well as in Matthew, that both the rich and poor are included in the terms and conditions of this invitation. The rich would be passing to and fro in the broad streets, the poor would naturally be found in the lanes and alleys. Instead of a select company of invited guests, a promiscuous company was now to be invited, comprising the rich and poor, high and low, persons in every class and condition, such as would

be found passing up and down the streets of any city or town. But the prominence given to the poorer class, in the words, *poor, maimed, halt, and blind*, is intended to show that they are not to be overlooked, or regarded as less worthy recipients of the gospel message than the rich. *Bring in hither*, does not signify compulsion, but rather the urgency of the message. So in v. 23, the word *compel* denotes only a higher degree of urgency, an importunity which would take no denial. These terms are happily selected, so far as they are applicable to the poor, who would naturally feel some reluctance to enter the house of this rich man, arising from a sense of the unfitness of their apparel, and their comparative ignorance of the forms to be observed at such a great feast, which reluctance would require some urgency of invitation to overcome.

22. *Yet there is room*. This shows how ample an entertainment had been provided, and in how capacious a hall the banquet had been spread. A beautiful and striking illustration of the richness and amplitude of the blessings of salvation, represented by the gospel feast.

23. Webster and Wilkinson refer the persons invited in v. 21 to the more abject and sinful of the Jews, or perhaps to the imperfectly instructed *proslaves of the gate* (see N. on Matt. 23: 15); the third invitation, to the yet more despised idolatrous Gentiles, living without the city. Instead of seeking to find such a distinction, I should refer it rather to the fulness of the purposes of grace, which will be satisfied with nothing short of the gathering in of *all*, who will listen to the message of



hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

the gospel, and obey its requisitions. It will be seen, that the persons invited embraced the whole population of the place. The selected guests, whose refusal is noted in vs. 18-20, the persons moving to and fro in the avenues of business, or crowded in the lanes and alleys, and those who were in the still more obscure places outside the city, are intended to represent the universality of the gospel in its offers of pardon and peace to men. *Highways and hedges*, i. e. the roads and by-paths outside the city. This does not refer to the country as distinct from the city, but to the remote limits or outskirts of the town or city, where the extreme poor would be apt to congregate. The word *highways* is not the one thus translated in Matt. 22: 9, on which see Note. It here signifies *the public roads*, in distinction from the *paths hedged in* and passing through or along by vineyards. In all these public roads and by-paths would be found the miserably poor and wretched, who were now to be brought in to the feast. This finds its parallel in Matt. 22: 9, 10. *Compel them, &c.* As has been remarked in v. 21, this is not to be taken in the sense of absolute compulsion, inasmuch as it would be contrary to all usage to force people to a feast; and had it been so, one servant could not have effected it. It is to be referred rather to that pressing importunity, which takes no refusal, a sort of moral compulsion, by which persons are sometimes induced to perform an act, repulsive in some of its features to their natural inclination. But we must remember that it was not a reluctance founded upon the pride and worldliness of the persons first invited, but a sense of their unworthiness to sit down at such an entertainment in their soiled and ragged garments, or to even come into the presence of so great a man, as the master of the feast. Thus Watts:

"'Twas the same love which spread the feast  
That sweetly forced us in."

Stier beautifully expresses the ground

24 For I say unto you, 'That

† Mat. 21: 43; & 23: 8; Ac. 13: 46.

of the reluctance, and the *force* with which it was overcome: "I am not worthy, nor can it be in truth that I am invited, I cannot go in my beggars garments to that high table; to which the servant's reply is, I cannot admit thy excuse, I cannot carry back such a message to my lord, thou shouldst and thou must come! Thy misery must be no hinderance, such as thou art I was to bring." From this parable, as well as from other portions of the word of God, the license and duty of urging the invitations of the gospel upon perishing men, are derived. A cold, formal summons to come to Christ, is contrary to the very spirit and letter of the instructions of this passage. Full in the sight of all is spread the feast of salvation. There is abundance of provisions. No one need stay away, through fear that he is not wanted or will not be accepted. The invitation is to all, "Come, for all things are now ready;" and the Master of the feast stands ready to welcome all, who will listen to the summons, and approach the well-spread board.

24. *For I say unto you, &c.* Most expositors regard these as not our Lord's own words, but those which he puts into the mouth of the householder. Compare Matt. 22: 7, where the king visits his displeasure upon the wicked and ungrateful men who had rejected his favors and murdered his servants, by their immediate and condign punishment. But I concur, with Stier, however, in referring it to words spoken by our Lord in his own name. It would be an appropriate reply to v. 15. 'You say blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. I say unto you, who are represented by the persons first bidden in the parable, that none of you shall even taste of the supper, provided for those who shall have part in the kingdom of God.' The indirect words *those men*, which Olshausen, without reason, urges as an objection to this view, are employed instead of the direct *you*, to indicate

none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

more clearly, that the Pharisees who sat at the table, belonged to the same class of persons represented by the men in the parable, who excused themselves from the feast. The identity, which the employment of *you* and *those men* in such a connection, established between the rejectors of the feast and the persons to whom our Lord was speaking, was so clear and emphatic, that we can well imagine how highly exasperated the company must have been, at so pungent an application of the parable. The word *for*, looks back to v. 15, and implies an ellipsis, "Say not, as far as yourselves are concerned, Blessed is he, &c., for I say unto you, that none of these men (i. e. you) which were bidden shall taste of my supper." If these are the direct words of our Lord, the expression *my supper*, has great force and significancy, indicating that what the man, who spoke in v. 15, regarded as an entertainment at the table of God, was in reality the table of Him, who then sat as an humble guest before them, and who was the object of their deepest opposition and scorn. *None of those men*, &c. See vs. 17-20. *Shall taste* (even the smallest morsel) stands opposed to *shall eat* in v. 15. *Of my supper*. The article in the original refers this to the supper then provided. But that supper is the type or symbol of all the blessings to come; and hence those who reject the gospel feast here on earth, will be forever excluded from all participation in its higher and more perfect realization in the world to come. The doom, therefore, here shadowed forth in this declaration, is not less awful in reality, than that which overtook the enemies of the king in Matthew. The decree of death in the one case, and the banishment from the feast in the other, was immediately issued and put into execution.

Such was the parabolic reply of our Lord to the guest, who pronounced those blessed who should eat bread in

25 ¶ And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

the kingdom of God. The great lesson which it taught, that not those who appeared the most likely to be participants of the Messianic blessings, would in reality enjoy this privilege, but those who were symbolized by the poor and despised in the parable, could not but have been understood, both by him and all who reclined at the table. We are not informed of the manner in which it was received by them; but we cannot doubt that its effects were seen in the increased malignity, with which those of them who attended the approaching passover, conspired to put Jesus to death. Some of them doubtless heard the parable, as it was pronounced afterwards in the temple in terms of increased severity, which must have been exasperating to the highest degree, inasmuch as the application which is there indirectly made in such severe language, they would remember to have been here directly referred to them.

25-35. WHAT IS REQUIRED OF TRUE DISCIPLES. *Perea*. Our Lord was on his way to Jerusalem, when the following discourses related by Luke were spoken. There are evident marks, however, that they followed close upon the termination of the feast. The invitation implied in the words *if any man come to me*, looks back most unquestionably to the invitation to the feast, and shows what constitutes its true acceptance. No one could be a partaker of the blessings indicated by the gospel feast, who was not ready to make a sacrifice of every worldly possession and enjoyment, and even to renounce the ties of relationship and his own life, if that were necessary to discipleship in the school of Christ. An unbroken train of thought will be found to mark the residue of this chapter and the next two, showing that our Lord pronounced them continuously, somewhere on his way to Jerusalem.

25. *There went great multitudes*, &c. These great crowds had been attracted

26 'If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, "yea,

‡ Da. 13 : 6 ; † 33 : 9 ; Mat. 10 : 37.

‡ Ro. 9 : 13. m Ro. 12 : 11.

to him by the cure of the man who had the dropsy (v. 4). As he proceeded on his way, they appear to have accompanied him, in order to witness further exhibitions of his miraculous power, or to hear the words of instruction which fell from his lips. Richly were they repaid for this attendance upon him, for he was about to give utterance to parables, which, as illustrative of the depth and tenderness of God's love, have no parallel. It is unnecessary, however, to suppose that these crowds followed him all the way to Jericho, and thence to Jerusalem (see N. on Matt. 20 : 29). They doubtless returned to their homes, as he approached the Jordan to cross over to Jericho. Webster and Wilkinson, however, think that these crowds were the union of large companies on their way to Jerusalem, being formed into one, in consequence of his presence. But could this be said of those referred to in 15 : 1 ? *He turned.* The form of expression indicates the act of pausing on his journey, and turning to address the crowds which were gathered behind him, in expectation of seeing some miracle or hearing something from his lips. Braune makes this excellent remark : "The Lord saw now in the people a vague and indistinct inclination towards himself, as in the Pharisee he had seen a vague and indistinct aversion." In reference to this Stier observes, that the inclination and aversion in both cases, were rash and unthinking, and wanting in all *humbleness*. But is not this too sweeping a remark, especially in regard to the multitudes who followed him, and as we trust with far different motives than actuated the proud and malignant Pharisees in their attendance upon our Lord ? We would not claim for these gathering numbers that high relish for

and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27 And "whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

‡ Mat. 16 : 14 ; Ma. 8 : 34 ; ch. 9 : 23 ; 2 Ti. 3 : 12.

spiritual instructions, which his more intimate and devoted followers were beginning to possess, but we may hope that they were nevertheless drawn to him, with a faint desire at least to hear something of the gospel of the kingdom, which he never failed to preach on every occasion.

26, 27. See Ns. on Matt. 10 : 37, 38. There is an advance here in the emphasis and fulness of the terms of discipleship. In Matthew, it was, "he that loveth father and mother more than me;" but here it is, "if any man come to me and *hate not his father and mother,*" &c. In the light of the passage in Matthew, as well as from the express teachings of God's word and the instincts of our nature, in regard to the love we owe our parents and family relatives, we are to interpret this as comparatively spoken, in the sense that our love to Christ is to be supreme, while that which we entertain to our parents and relations is to be subordinate, and not suffered in the least to interfere with supreme devotion to his interests. That *hatred* is not literally signified is evident, not only from the nature of the case and the very laws of our being, but from our Lord's own example while he hung on the cross (John 19 : 25-27), as well as from the strong ties of love and friendship, which existed between him and many persons, during his sojourn on earth. No one is then to so mistake the spirit and intent of this strong language, as to suppose that discipleship with Christ requires a morose and moody temper towards any, least of all to those who have a natural right to our love and confidence. Asceticism and disregard of the social relations of life, are enjoined upon the followers of Christ, neither by his command nor example. Where there is a conflict,

28 For 'which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not

o Pr. 24: 27.

however, between the cause of Christ and the claims of family ties, the former is to have full and entire precedence, and the latter to give place, as though they were the objects of extreme aversion. *His own life* is here to be taken of natural life, and its attendant blessings and enjoyments. These also are to be regarded as worthless, when placed in an opposing scale to the love of Christ, and therefore to be freely surrendered, when required to be yielded up in his service. See N. on Matt. 10: 39. Such a hatred as is here required, is, in reality, the highest self-love, when regarded in the light of the soul's welfare beyond the grave. Alford well remarks upon the hatred here enjoined, "it hardly need be observed, that *this hate* is not only consistent with, but absolutely *necessary* to the very highest kind of love. It is that element in love, which makes a man a wise and Christian friend, not for time only, but for eternity."

28-33. Having laid down the rule of supreme devotion to the cause of Christ, and the precedence to be given to his service above all the claims of the most intimate relations of life, our Lord very naturally proceeds to show that the cost of discipleship should be duly and carefully estimated, by all who would become his followers. This is illustrated by the prudential maxims which govern men, when on the eve of some great undertaking, as the building of a tower, or a military expedition. No man of ordinary prudence or forethought would erect an expensive edifice, without first ascertaining its cost, in order to see if it came within his means. Nor would a king or military chieftain make war with a neighboring potentate, without first considering the numbers and discipline of his army, and whether it would be safe to lead them against a force numerically at least superior to his own. Thus our Lord would have those who aspired to be his disciples, consider well the cost and

down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it?

sacrifice, which such discipleship involved.

28. The word *tower*, is too indefinite here to enable us to determine, whether it refers to a military tower, or one erected to command a view of the surrounding country. The expression *which of you*—unless the pronoun is used as representative of mankind in general, including kings, governors, military commanders, and the like, which does not seem to be justified by the character and condition of the persons here addressed, who were in the private walks of life—would seem to indicate that the reference is had to a turreted mansion, or a watch-tower, combining adornment with utility (see N. on Matt. 21: 33), rather than to a military tower. It was, however, a great and expensive undertaking, and required previous thought and calculation, as to whether the person who intended its erection, had the means to finish it. *Sitteth down* implies that the calculation was not made in haste; but that ample time and pains were taken to learn the real cost of the undertaking. The words *counteth the cost*, denote literally, *determineth by arithmetical calculations*, as in ancient times they computed or reckoned with pebbles or counters. All this indicates the closest scrutiny into the cost of the structure, with reference to the ability to finish the work when commenced. "The *sitting down first* and considering well from the very beginning all that is involved in the continuing and finishing, is to commence with deep thoughtfulness, not rashly and superficially, in contrast with that unconsidering and thoughtless running after Him, which was witnessed at this time, and which the Lord intends to humble and repel." Stier. *Whether*, i. e. to see whether. This is the aim and object of all the previous thought and calculation. In our English version, which hits well the idea, it was unnecessary to italicize *sufficient*, as the idea of this word is

29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

contained in the preposition of the original, the literal translation of which with its noun is, *the means to or with reference to completion*. When it is borne in mind, how many violate the principle of prudent forethought here laid down, even in worldly matters, and commence great and expensive undertakings, with little or no regard to their ability to finish what they so rashly begin, we see how forcible is this illustration, when applied to the discipleship of Christ, involving, as it does, an amount of effort, energy, and self-devotion, which no human undertaking requires, however vast or expensive it may chance to be.

29. *Lest haply*, i. e. lest perchance. *After he hath laid*, &c. The force of the original construction is better preserved by translating, *having laid the foundation, and not being able to finish* (the edifice), *all that behold*, &c. The word *to mock*, which by usage is appropriated more particularly to external gestures and contemptuous mimicry, has here the sense to *deride*, *scoff at*. How is this to be taken in the spiritual application of this illustration? Who are they that deride the man who professes to be a disciple of Christ, and yet gives evidence that he has not counted the cost, and that the spiritual edifice is incomplete on his hands? We are warranted by the terms of the illustration here made use of, and our own observation, in referring them to the world at large, which while it hates the true and humble believer, yet despises him, whose profession is at variance with his practice. But there is a deeper and more significant meaning. What is faintly disclosed in the present life, in the ridicule often heaped upon one whose conduct belies his profession, will appear in full prominence hereafter, when the veil of concealment is removed, and these rash and thoughtless builders are shown, not only to

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31 Or what king, going to make war against another king,

have brought their undertaking to no completion, but to have laid a defective foundation, which rendered worthless the whole structure built thereon. Then the folly of their thoughtless conduct, and vain confidence in resources which they did not possess, will fully appear, and they will be the objects of "shame and everlasting contempt," both to the righteous and the wicked. Thus the defective building here brought to notice, and the one built on the foundation of sand in Matt. 7 : 24, involve one and the same great truth, of the worthlessness of an outward profession and show of piety, if the heart be not changed within, and its ruling principle, the love and service of God.

30. *This man*. The connection throws a shade of sarcasm on the expression. It was a striking evidence of his want of forethought and discretion, to lay the foundation of a costly structure, which he had not the means to finish. This has grown into an adage at the present time, and was perhaps so in the time of Christ. It conveys so just and severe a rebuke to prodigal expenditure, without sufficient means to justify it, that perhaps no proverb is more frequently or fitly employed. In regard to the groundwork of this parable, Alford finds an allusion to the spiritual edifice, referred to in 1 Cor. 3 : 11-15, which must be reared on "the one Foundation which shall be tried in the day of the Lord." This same expositor remarks, that when the disciple of Christ counts the cost, it must always issue "in a discovery of the utter inadequacy of his own resources, and the going out of himself for strength and means to build."

31. The same idea is illustrated still further and more vividly, in this parable of two kings going to war. If one of them finds from a previous calculation of his military strength, that he is too weak to meet his enemy in battle,

sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that

he sues for peace. So he who would be the disciple of Christ, in view of his rebellion against God, and its certain consequences, must make timely and unconditional submission, and be ready to take cheerfully upon himself any service or duty, however unpleasant or even repulsive to his proud and rebellious heart. This parable differs from the other, in that it illustrates the *want of power* on the part of Christ's disciple to finish the work, designated in the former parable by the building of a tower. This results from the natural opposition of the heart to God. Hence suing for conditions of peace is the same as prayer to God for grace to overcome the rebellious desires and inclinations within, and strength to struggle with and overcome the manifold temptations, which beset our pathway to the very end of life. The first parable has reference then to the building of a spiritual edifice on the true Foundation-stone, which building is to be carried on to full completion, in order to prevent the derision, which a failure will be sure to provoke. The second illustrates the want of power to achieve the great work of building this spiritual edifice, unless, by timely submission, help is obtained from the Great King, with whom the soul has been heretofore in a state of enmity. The first parable teaches the necessity of a firm and deliberate purpose to make religion the chief object of attention, until the warfare on earth is fully accomplished and the victory won; the second, throws the soul helpless and dependent upon the sovereign grace of God for assistance. So Stier well expresses it: "*The building before looked rather back to the commencement (began to build, v. 30); but now the warfare exhibits, properly speaking, the finishing unto victory, the winning and maintaining our great object. War, as the Lord here intends it, can only be when there is a beginning of discipleship; man naturally is at peace with the world and*

cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is

its prince, and does not seek conditions of peace with God. Consequently that other king with whom this conflict has to do, can by no means be the prince of this world or the devil, but no other than God, the disciple's Lord, opposing Himself as an *apparent* enemy to His children, because His sacred and sanctifying power and discipline must ever be in conflict with all their independent life and will, until it be extinguished." Such also is Alford's interpretation of this parable, and such is undoubtedly its true sense, which the usual exposition, which refers the stronger and more powerful king to the god of this world, wholly overlooks. *With ten thousand—with twenty thousand.* Whatever may be the strength of sin within, and its deep-rooted hold upon the whole spiritual man, God's *twenty thousand* is superior, and will give him the victory. Only let our surrender to Him be timely and unconditional, and our supplication for divine peace, fervent and constant, and the hour of our triumph over every spiritual foe, is sure to come.

32. Or else, i. e. if he finds himself too weak to meet his foe in battle. *While the other, &c.* This evinces his prudence. He does not wait until the enemy is at his gate, but makes overtures of submission while he is yet far off. Compare with this reconciliation effected while the parties were locally far separated, but were in the way of an amicable adjustment of their differences, the wondrous love and grace of God, as represented in the parable of the prodigal son, by the father who when his son—standing in the same relation to him as this weak king to his powerful adversary, and on his way to seek his pardon—was yet a great way off, saw him and ran to meet him with the offer of pardon and restoration to favor. It is remarkable how all these representations of the way of conciliation between erring, rebellious man, and his offended Maker, harmonize and blend together in consistent fulness and

yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

union. Who can doubt that the powerful king, in this parable, represents God, against whom all men are in a state of rebellion, and who should be approached at once with humble submission and love? *He sendeth an ambassage* (i. e. an embassy). This is spoken for the sake of verisimilitude. It would not have comported with royal usage, for the king to have gone in person to sue for conditions of peace. But this feature belongs exclusively to the costume of the parable. In seeking the forgiveness and favor of God, each one must go in person. No sinner can be pardoned, who seeks to secure the blessing by commissioning any one to act in his place. He must make a personal surrender of himself, and renounce the ways of sin, before he can expect any conditions whatever of peace and pardon. This does not militate, however, against the efficacy of prayer in behalf of an impenitent friend. But the answer to such prayer is not in contravention to the universal rule, pervading the whole redemptive economy of God, that the sinner himself must come to Him, and by personal repentance and submission, end the perilous conflict in which he is engaged. *Conditions of peace*, i. e. the terms on which peace will be granted. There is nothing said here about the disgrace of pursuing the war, with such a disparity of forces, that defeat must be inevitable. This is left to be supplied from the preceding parable. But with the implied disgrace of defeat is here added another element, in the dreadful doom which might be expected to await the defeated and captured king. The cruelties practised upon subjugated kings, in being mutilated (see 2 Chron. 23 : 11, 12; Jer. 52 : 10, 11), loaded with chains, carried away into captivity, led in triumph before the car of the conqueror, and thrown into loathsome dungeons to die there, are well known to those conversant with sacred and profane history. This is left in the para-

83 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

ble to be supplied by the mind of the reader, but should not be lost sight of, in estimating the dreadful consequences of persisting in open rebellion against the Great King.

83. This verse contains the general conclusion drawn from the foregoing premises. *So likewise*, i. e. as was the doom and disgrace of the man, who by not counting the cost was unable to finish what he had begun; and of the king, who did not avert danger by wise and timely submission; *so whosoever he be of you, &c.* It will be seen that our Lord repeats, with additional emphasis drawn from the parables, the only conditions of discipleship; the words *forsaketh all that he hath*, being a condensed expression of the terms of discipleship made known in v. 26. The word rendered *forsaketh* (literally, *disowneth or dismisseth from himself*), implies not only the renunciation of the things spoken of, but the additional idea of doing this through love of the very opposite of the thing renounced. It is worthy of note, that there is one point of dissimilitude between the persons spoken of in the parable and the disciple of Christ. They considered the means at their disposal, and drew thence their conclusion, as to their ability to execute their plans; but the disciple was to throw aside as worthless, all which he possessed, and having forsaken every thing, enter upon his discipleship with Christ. But this, so far from impairing, gives force to the parable, by placing self-denial, the hardest of all duties, in the very foreground of the service of Christ. It must never be forgotten in the interpretation of all such parables as these, that there is a human and a divine side, on which they are to be examined. The man was to exhaust all his means upon the spiritual edifice, he was to call into exertion all his powers; but in that very act, he was to renounce all dependence upon his own works, and look to the grace of God

34 'Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

p Mat. 5: 13; Ma. 9: 50.

for the means of rearing the structure (see Eph. 2: 10). So the king was to muster his forces and number them for the battle, but to remember, at the same time, that he who was coming against him, would so outnumber his forces, that he must renounce all dependence upon his own power to make war, and go forth and sue for peace and forgiveness. This twofold, but coincident and harmonious action, is expressed in the clearest and most emphatic terms in Philip. 2: 12, and its recognition is not only essential to right views of personal efforts for salvation, but to the understanding of other truths, which lie in its immediate vicinity.

34, 35. See Notes on Matt. 5: 13; Mark 9: 50. The terms of discipleship naturally led our Lord to repeat the similitude existing between true disciples and the properties of salt. The words are no doubt proverbial, and like all such adagial sayings, are adduced frequently to enforce and illustrate great and important truths. *It is neither fit for the land, &c.* Dr. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. ii. p. 44) says of the salt of Palestine: "From the manner in which it is gathered, much earth and other impurities are necessarily connected with it. Not a little of it is so impure, that it cannot be used at all, and such salt soon effloresces and turns to dust—not to fruitful soil, however. It is good for nothing itself, but it actually destroys all fertility wherever it is thrown, and this is the reason why it is cast into the street. There is a sort of verbal verisimilitude in the manner in which our Lord alludes to the act: 'it is cast out' and 'trodden under foot;' so troublesome is this corrupted salt, that it is carefully swept up, carried forth, and thrown into the street. There is no place about the house, yard, or garden, where it can be tolerated. No

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35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

man will allow it to be thrown into his field, and the only place for it is in the street, and there it is cast to be trodden under foot of men." We see from this extract, that our Lord could not have selected a more striking illustration of the worthless character of false discipleship, than the one here made use of. With equal force and clearness, it shows how pertinent is the connection of this passage with the preceding context, which some expositors have so lost sight of, that they look upon it as interposed here, from some other connection in which they originally stood. *Dunghill* is here put for *manure*. *Cast it out.* The original has a lively emphasis, *out they cast it*, almost like our contemptuous expression, *out or away with it*, as a thing utterly worthless.

## CHAPTER XV.

1-32. PARABLES OF THE LOST SHEEP, THE PIECES OF SILVER, AND THE PRODIGAL SON. *Persea.*

### PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

The connection of this parabolic discourse with the preceding chapter, has been a matter of much discussion and various opinion. Olshausen thinks that it forms a contrast with the severity of the preceding discourse, the point of junction between the two being our Lord's rejection of some and acceptance of others. This view appears the more plausible from the character of the persons to whom the discourses were addressed, the former being, as this expositor thinks, a company of self-reliant, curious persons who had flocked together and were following Jesus to see or hear something strange and wonderful, while the present company were poor, despised publicans and sinners. To the former he laid down, in the most explicit terms, the stern requirements of discipleship, the



latter he invites to come to him by the most tender and winning appeals. That there is this contrast between the two discourses cannot be denied; yet that such a contrast was intended, or that the two discourses have any connection other than that both were delivered in Perea, on his way to Jerusalem, I am inclined to doubt. The commencement of chap. xv. is such as marks a new discourse, and we may suppose that during this whole journey, as successive crowds gathered around him, he addressed them in language adapted to their condition and circumstances. It would seem that at this time, an unusual number of publicans and others, who were looked upon by the Pharisees as sinners, were present. Commiserating their condition, our Lord received them kindly, and condescended to eat with them. This gave offence to the scribes and Pharisees, who, in greater or less numbers, were always present, watching to find some ground of accusation in his words or actions. As usual they gave vent to their displeasure in low and angry murmurings, which either reached our Lord's ear, or which he discerned by his own omniscience. He took occasion, therefore, to show how different from the contempt, with which the Pharisees regarded any effort on the part of these despised men to reform their lives and conduct, was the favor with which God regarded the repentance and return to Him of the vilest sinners. The parables, by which this wondrous love of God to sinners is illustrated and enforced, were addressed to the Pharisees who stood by, but yet so as to be audible to the publicans and others, who doubtless stood at a more respectful distance, through fear of offence to their proud and bigoted enemies.

In regard to the connection of thought and gradation of these parables, it may be remarked, that the sheep which wandered away, evidently is intended to represent a less advanced lapse into sin, than the piece of silver, lost beyond all knowledge of the place where it lay hidden from sight. The prodigal son wandering away from his father's house, and debasing himself in

the lowest depths of infamy, is a still farther advance in the representation of guilt, misery, and ill-desert. There is also, in the numbers here employed in the respective parables, a feature which should not be overlooked. There were *ninety and nine* sheep left to the shepherd, who searched so carefully and unremittingly for the lost one. Only *nine* pieces of silver remained in the store of the poor woman, who had lost the tenth piece, and had so faint a prospect of its recovery. But *one* son was left to the aged father, to solace him for the living death of his younger and darling son. There is then a twofold gradation, the one in the increasing hopelessness of the recovery of that which was lost; the other, in the value of the lost articles, rendered prominent by the decreasing proportion in the number of what remained, compared with what was lost. To this may be added the fact, that in the prodigal son, which brings out and gives emphasis to the richness of the divine love and forgiveness, as hardly any other portion of God's word does, the lost was a *son*, in reference to whom, there was a yearning of affection, and depth of longing desire for his recovery from sin and restoration to virtue and happiness, which casts very far into the background any grief for a lost animal or piece of silver.

There is also another point of difference, not between the three parables separately considered, but between the first two and the third. In the parables of the lost sheep and piece of silver, the lost articles are carefully and anxiously sought after; whereas in that of the prodigal son, the father does not go forth to seek for his son, but remains in the attitude of one who is anxious for his return, and ready to receive him with joy and full, unlimited pardon. There is an appropriateness in this. There could be no blame, in the nature of the case, to be attached to the stupid and silly sheep, which wandered away from the flock, nor to the piece of silver, which had been dropped in some unknown by-place. Nor could it be expected that they would return, the one to the sheepfold, and the other to the woman's purse, unsought for. It was meet,

therefore, that the shepherd should return to the place of pasturage, and seek carefully for his lost animal, and that the woman should sweep her house, and seek diligently until she found the lost piece of silver. But the prodigal voluntarily abandoned the home of his childhood and his aged father, and went forth on a career of shame and sin, from which every attempt to reclaim him, had his father sought him, would have been useless. Hence, therefore, the parable consistently represents him as pursuing his downward course, until he is reduced to such straits, that he begins to turn his thoughts to his father's house, with all its comforts and plenty. As his departure from home had been voluntary, so his return must be a spontaneous and voluntary act. What now is taught by this comparative feature in the parables? Simply the great truth, to which reference has been made in the comments on 14: 32, that the return and submission of the sinner must be his own personal act; while at the same time, as a true, real, and most consoling and encouraging fact, God is seeking for him, and as it were, bringing him in his arms to the fold of his grace (v. 5). The first two parables represent God, therefore, as *seeking* the lost sinner and bringing him back to truth, duty, and happiness; the third parable gives prominence to the sinner's *own* agency in this return, and represents God, as ready and willing to welcome and receive him into favor. This is the reason why the first two parables have nothing in them, which directly brings into prominence the repentance of the lost sinner. It might be sufficient to say in reference to this, that the verisimilitude of the parable would be destroyed by predicating repentance of a sheep or a piece of silver. But in the spiritual application of the parables, there is a niche for this great idea, although, as above remarked, this in its full prominence is left to be brought out in the parable of the prodigal son. The effort of the shepherd to find the lost sheep, symbolizes God's merciful provision for man's recovery from sin; his successful search indicates that God's overtures of mercy have been received

by the sinner in penitence and love. The central idea, however, of these two parables, is God's gracious agency in man's recovery from sin, and the joy, with which the accomplishment of this is hailed in heaven, even as well as on earth.

In regard to the persons designated by the "ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance," I cannot refer them to other than the saints in heaven, already confirmed in holiness. Stier regards them as synonymous with the Pharisees, and all such persons as ask not for the way, hearken not to the word, and draw not near to the Saviour or Shepherd to hear him. The abhorred picture of these supposed just ones, he finds exhibited in full by the character of the elder son in the third parable. Such also is Olshausen's view of the persons here represented. But does this comport with the character represented by the sheep, who remained safe in the fold? Did not the restoration of the lost sheep, put it in precisely the same condition in which those of the flock had remained and then were, which had not wandered from the fold? Were the ninety and nine as odious to the eye of the shepherd, who temporarily left them on his search for the lost sheep, as Pharisees and self-righteous men are in the sight of God? So far from this, the whole framework of the parable shows, that the shepherd did not prize the lost sheep above any other one of the flock, except in the fact, that his sympathy and care were especially awakened in its behalf, from the very fact of its having wandered off to places of danger, where, unless recovered by his timely and vigilant search, it would be destroyed. This awakened care and anxiety was followed by a corresponding joy at its recovery, which, for the time being, made it dearer to him than the whole flock besides, which were in a place of safety whence they had never strayed. All this is plain, and proves beyond the possibility of doubt, that the self-righteous Pharisees are not symbolized by these innocent sheep, that awaited the glad return of the shepherd, from his successful search for the lost one. But the question still

remains, who are represented by these ninety and nine just persons, who need no repentance, having never wandered away from the fold. Doddridge, and most of the older expositors refer it to "confirmed and established saints," who need not such an universal change of mind and character. Webster and Wilkinson think that it may refer to those persons who have undergone a complete change of mind, as exhibited in a corresponding change of life, living just in God's sight, by his grace, and not by their own righteousness. At the same time, these expositors suggest, that the word may have been *ironically* spoken of what the scribes and Pharisees claimed to be. But the assertion in v. 7, is of too sublime and solemn a nature to admit of its ironical reference to such persons as the Pharisees. Trench admits this shade of irony as very appropriate, yet thinks that our Lord could hardly have meant merely this, the whole construction of the parable being against such an explanation. "The ninety and nine had *not* wandered, the nine pieces of money had *not* been lost, the elder brother had *not* left his father's house." This expositor of the Parables "understands these *righteous* as really such, their righteousness, however, being merely legal and of the old dispensation, so that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than they." But were there any persons under the old dispensation so righteous as to need no repentance? Were the lives of Abraham, Moses, Daniel, Hezekiah, and other eminent saints of the Old Testament so perfect, that they needed no repentance for sin, no tears of contrition for their short-comings in duty? There is but one meaning which can be attached to the expression *just persons*, in this connection, and that is entire freedom from sin, and confirmation in holiness. The persons referred to are safe in God's fold, either having never wandered away, like the angels who stand before God and serve him, or having been reclaimed and admitted into God's presence, where they are now sinless and in no danger of ever falling away again into sin.

The question may arise, whether reference is had to a literal verity or reality in heaven, or to a supposed condition of saints on earth. It will be seen, that this last supposition is different from taking the words in an ironical sense. It is simply the idea thus expressed: "more than over ninety and nine just persons, (on the supposition that such persons were found on the earth,) which need no repentance." There is no serious objection to this view, but yet the wants of the passage are best met, by supposing it to relate to what *actually* exists in the realm of God. So Alford remarks: "If it be required that the words should be literally explained, seeing that these ninety and nine *did not err*, then I see no other way but to suppose them, in the deeper meaning of the parable, to be the *worlds that have not fallen*, and the one that has strayed, our human nature, in this our world." This is too far-fetched a conclusion, although it has the basis of the true interpretation. It is not the worlds that have not fallen, to which reference is here made, nor human salvation in the abstract, over which the angels rejoice; but the persons referred to are the saints in heaven, confirmed in holiness, and no longer in any danger of relapsing into sin and rebellion against God. If it be objected to this, that the fold where remained in safety the ninety and nine sheep, was on earth, and therefore these just persons must also be such as are yet in this world, I do not consider such an objection to have much force; for the joy of the earthly shepherd finds its counterpart in the joy of the angels in heaven, and the same may be true of the other features of the parable. The repenting sinner is regarded as virtually belonging to the ranks of the blessed above, and it is his introduction to this new life and companionship, which causes a louder expression of joy in the angelic ranks, than the presence of those, whom they had in like manner rejoiced over, in the hour of their conversion, but were now confirmed saints in God's holy presence. Such a view is the only one, in my judgment, which comports with the

## CHAPTER XV.

**T**HEN drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes

a Mat. 9:10.

true dignity of our Lord's remark in v. 7, which evidently lifts us up from earth, and discloses the effect produced in the heavenly world by the conversion to God of a poor, wretched, degraded sinner. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the whole company of the holy patriarchs and saints of the Old Testament, are comparatively lost sight of in the tide of joy which flows through the angelic ranks at the news of the conversion of one sinner on earth. How wonderful and sublime is this manifestation of interest in an event, which, in the estimation of the men of this world, is of such little importance. It is the revelation of a great truth, which must not be impaired or shorn of its effulgence, by any reference of it, ironically or otherwise, to the class of self-righteous men referred to in v. 2. There were times, and this was one, when our Lord lost sight of things temporal, and revealed those great realities, which were known only to the Son, who dwelt from all eternity in the bosom of the Father.

1. *Then drew near, &c.* Literally, *were drawing near* according to their usual habit and custom. The word rendered *then*, does not mark time by the mere continuation of the narrative. The notion of Doddridge has no foundation from this connection, that these men had gathered around the Pharisee's house where Jesus was dining, and that he addressed them as he came forth from the house into which they could not have been admitted. It is better to regard this discourse, as following close upon or soon after the one detailed in vs. 25-35 of the preceding chapter. *Publicans and sinners.* See N. on Matt. 9:10. *To hear him* denotes the purpose for which they gathered around him. There is an implied contrast between the object for which

murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

b Ac. 11:8; Ga. 2:12.

they sought the presence of Christ, and the mere motive of curiosity which appears to have actuated the multitudes who followed him in 14:25. A deep sense of the need of just such instruction as he imparted, was the cause of their assembling in such numbers to hear him; although it would be too much to suppose, that they were all free from the motives of curiosity, which drew many to Jesus, after his fame had become public.

2. *Murmured*; literally, *were murmuring through* (the whole time), i. e. they kept murmuring. Bengel: *were murmuring among themselves*. The verb as compounded is susceptible of either signification. *This man.* A contemptuous expression. See N. on Matt. 9:3. *Receiveth* into his presence and favor. *Eateth with them.* This cannot be referred, as some think, to former and general habits of intercourse with these men, for it is evident that these fresh murmurs arose from what took place on that very occasion. It shows, too, that Doddridge's conjecture (see N. on v. 1) is wrong, for our Lord would not have partaken of another repast almost at the same time that he left the Pharisee's table. There can be no doubt, that reference is had to what took place on a subsequent day and stage of his journey to Jerusalem.

3. There are many points of resemblance between this parable of the lost sheep, and the one related in Matt. 18:12, 13, which in the main will make a reference to the Notes there suffice for the verbal interpretation. The scope of the two parables is, however, not the same; the one in Matthew being intended to show the high estimation, in which God holds the most humble follower of Christ, and the danger and sin of treating such a "little one" with

4 'What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and

o Mat. 18: 12.

oversight or disrespect. Here the joy of the recovery of one who has strayed away from the fold is depicted. This implies, however, the high estimate which God puts upon the human soul, so that both parables have the same basis in God's boundless and unchangeable love. *In the wilderness* refers here to an uninhabited, untilled region, but furnishing good pasturage, especially for sheep. Hence, in the application of this parable, if it be deemed a significant feature, it is not to be referred to the wilderness of sin and impenitence, but to the pastures of God's grace (Ps. 23: 2), from which the lost sheep had strayed away. But its application is not to be restricted to the mere framework or costume of the parable. Its great and prominent feature is the recovery of those lost and miserable sinners, who have never yet been within God's spiritual fold, except in the general sense, that the human family represented in Adam and Eve their progenitors, were created at first in God's own image and likeness. From this fold, in which man was originally placed, every one has strayed away, and thus sealed, by his own individual act, the justice of the condemning sentence pronounced in Eden upon the whole race. To this great truth the parable undoubtedly refers, in its reference to the straying away of the lost sheep from the oversight and watchful care of the shepherd. The difference of the position in the parable of the *wilderness* here, and the *mountains* in Matthew, is referred to in my Note on that evangelist. *And go after that which was lost.* The preposition *after* does not quite reach the strength of the original. The literal rendering is *upon*, denoting the strength and singleness of purpose with which the action of the verb is directed towards the end for which it is put forth. It is as

go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

though it had been said, 'goes in quest of it with his whole thought and desire fixed upon it.' *Until he find it.* The time of the search is not limited or restricted. It is represented as continued until the lost object is found. This shows how great a value was put by the shepherd upon the lost animal. "The figure of the Good Shepherd faithfully seeking his lost sheep, which our Lord was well pleased to recur to again and again, is taken from the centre of the Old Testament, where not only is Jehovah so exhibited in his relations to the people and to individuals, but the future manifestation of his fulness of grace in the Messiah is especially presented in imagery of this kind." Stier. In the light of such passages as Luke 19: 10, as well as other texts which might be adduced, we can have no hesitation in referring this search for the lost sheep, to the work of human redemption, which Jesus, the eternal Son of God, the Good Shepherd, took upon himself; including of course all the means of salvation attending upon and resulting from this wonderful transaction, such as the dispensation of the Spirit, the ministry of the word, the ordinances of the gospel, and the like, by which men are brought to the fold of Christ.

5. *He layeth it on his (literally, his own) shoulders.* The animal is supposed to be too weak, from its privations and wanderings, to be driven before him; or perhaps it is intended to show his great joy at finding it, that in a transport of delight, he takes it upon his shoulders, and carries it to the place where he had left the flock. Bloomfield says that it may have been a custom with the Jewish shepherds, to carry their sheep on their shoulders, but that this passage will not prove it, for a lost sheep far from home must by shepherds of all countries be carried, since a single sheep cannot be driven." The

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep <sup>d</sup> which was lost.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Pe. 2: 10, 25.

early Christians were fond of portraying our Lord, as a shepherd bearing his sheep upon his shoulder, and certainly no pictorial representation could be more expressive.

6. *When he cometh home, &c.* The great joy exhibited by this man can scarcely be appreciated by us, whose means of actual knowledge of a shepherd's life are so limited. The tenderness manifested by a good and faithful shepherd towards his flock, and their corresponding attachment to him, are things well known in regions where the pastoral employment is common. There can be no doubt, that what our Lord here speaks of was of quite frequent occurrence, and had fallen under the notice of many of his hearers. *Friends and neighbors* are put generically for those living in his immediate neighborhood. Bengel, in the application of the parable, draws an argument from this for different orders in the celestial hierarchies. That is doubtless true, but cannot be proved from this feature of the parable, which is merely æsthetic, and founded upon the natural and common distinctions of life. *Friends and neighbors* with us at the present time serve to denote generically those in our neighborhood, with whom we are on terms of intimate friendship, and who might be expected to sympathize in our pleasures and griefs, and to whom therefore we would resort for expressions of sympathy in times of unwonted prosperity or adversity. In the light of v. 7, we may infer, however, the wondrous condescension of God, in stooping to share his divine joy at man's restoration to holiness, with the angels, but we must be cautious against forming any gross conceptions of the companionship of this joy, by a too literal application of the words of the parable. On this subject see further re-

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, 'more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. 5: 32.

marks in the comments on v. 7. *My sheep which was lost*; literally, *my sheep, the lost one*. The presence of the article in the original, indicates that the loss of the sheep had been generally known in the neighborhood. Now the news that the animal is found spreads rapidly around, and the people are called together, to celebrate the event with demonstrations of joy.

7. *Likewise*, i. e. after the same manner, and for the same reason. *Joy shall be in heaven*, i. e. in the presence of God and among the holy angels (see v. 10). Were this not spoken by One who knows well what transpires in heaven, we might well be incredulous at this amazing declaration. But not to speak of the authority on which it here rests, we might infer the same glorious truth, from the mission of the Son of God to save lost sinners. If such an expensive provision was made for the recovery of man from sin and death, could angels well repress their joy, when they see its actual result in the salvation of immortal souls, who would otherwise have perished forever? *Over one sinner*. The word rendered *over*, is the same as the one translated *after* or more correctly *upon* in v. 4. Here it refers to the joy with which the angelic affections rest upon the repenting sinner; while in v. 4, the design and aim of the action going forth upon the lost sheep, is designated. These prepositions impart great beauty and force to the thought, but cannot at all times be translated into English without an awkward circumlocution. *Ninety and nine just persons*, is to be referred to the saints confirmed in holiness in heaven (see Preliminary Remarks), and therefore needing no further acts of repentance. It hardly need be remarked, that this does not teach that a repenting sinner on-earth is worthy of more

8 ¶ Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it ?

esteem than ninety-nine confirmed saints in heaven. All that is meant is, that the interest for the time being is concentrated upon him, and the others are comparatively lost sight of. As when a sick child, brought to the verge of the grave, first gives evidence of recovery, parental affection will seem to expend itself on him alone, the other children, though equally dear, being temporarily forgotten; so are God and his holy angels represented as rejoicing over the recovery of the lost sinner, and losing sight, as it were, of the trophies of victorious grace already gathered into the kingdom. Such joy is marvellous in our eyes. Of its reality, however, we have in the words of our Lord the highest assurance. The implied rebuke to the scribes and Pharisees, who would prevent this exercise of divine compassion and love, by prohibiting the publicans and sinners from approaching him, is too obvious to be dwelt upon. The pronoun *you*, must not be referred, as is done by some expositors, to this latter class of persons, as our Lord addresses these parables in reply to the angry murmurs spoken of in v. 2.

8. This parable, which is peculiar to Luke, is of the same general tenor with the preceding one. It is an advance, as has been remarked in the Preliminary Observations, upon the parable of the lost sheep, in that the piece of money was lost, the place where it lay concealed from the eye being wholly unknown; whereas the sheep was wandering away, and not yet, so far as the costume of the parable is concerned, so absolutely lost as was the piece of money. The disproportion between nine to one, and ninety-nine to one, gives this parable also an increased emphasis over the former one; although it must be admitted, that the value of the lost arti-

9 And when she hath found it, she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

cle is the only point here brought forward, the affection for the thing lost, which was so prominent in the parable of the lost sheep, being wanting. But even in this view, the parable gathers strength; for the argument is *a fortiori* (see Matt. 5:16), on the ground of the vast difference between an inanimate piece of money of limited value, and the soul of man, which transcends in worth the whole material universe. See Matt. 16:26; Mark 8:36, 37. *What woman having ten pieces of silver.* It may have been all she possessed, and hence, although of comparatively small value, these pieces were carefully treasured up, and the loss of one would be a serious affliction. *Pieces of silver*; literally, *drachmas*. The value of this coin was about 15 cents. This woman was, therefore, in possession of but a small sum of money, and the loss of one piece only was severely felt. It was one-tenth of all she possessed. *Doth not light, &c.* This search corresponds to the going forth of the shepherd, in the preceding parable, in quest of his lost sheep. *Diligently*; more literally, *carefully*. Her whole thoughts were upon the lost piece. She spared no pains to find it. Every part of the house was searched with great care and minuteness. Those places not exposed to the light of day, were examined with a lighted candle. She even sweeps the whole house, in order to reach every place, where her lost treasure may perchance lie concealed. It is easy to be seen, that there is an advance here upon the preceding parable, which speaks only of the shepherd as "going after that which was lost, until he find it." See v. 4. 9. *She calleth, &c.* She is already at her own house, and hence nothing is said about her returning, as did the shepherd in v. 6. We should not on this account seek to find in this parable

## 10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the

the efforts put forth by the church, or God's Spirit in the church, to reclaim her lost children, as seems to be the idea of Stier. Both parables refer most undoubtedly to the mission of Jesus Christ into this world to save the lost, including of course all the redemptive economy of grace, such as the influences of the Spirit, and the divine ordinances. The framework of the parable did not permit of the woman's return home, being, as she was, already in the house. But we are not to press that circumstance, or her being of a different sex from the shepherd, to teach that another agency in man's redemption, namely, the church, or the Spirit indwelling in the church, is referred to. The simple points are the value of the lost article, the efforts made to find it, and the joy consequent thereon, and these correspond so exactly to the great points of the preceding parable, that the SEEKER in both must be one and the same. *Her friends and neighbors.* The feminine gender is employed in the original. It was natural that the woman should call together her female friends to rejoice with her, but nothing further is to be sought from this circumstance of sex, than what pertains to the verisimilitude of the parable.

10. *Likewise I say unto you, &c.* This shows conclusively that both parables look to the illustration of the same great truth, that joy pervades the whole assemblage of holy beings, when a single sinner is converted from death unto life. Two examples are selected to enforce this truth. One is founded upon the affection, manifested by a shepherd toward a stray sheep; the other relates to a poor woman, who had lost a piece of money, which she could ill afford to spare from her scanty treasure. The parables are simple, drawn from the ordinary occurrences of life, and easy of application. No earnest reader of God's word can mistake their design. Thousands upon thousands, in every age, have received comfort from these beautiful and sim-

ple parables, and will continue so to do to the end of time. We should not perplex ourselves with vain and useless efforts, to discern the spiritual meaning of *friends and neighbors*, when we have the interpretation of the Son of God himself, that they symbolize the rejoicing angels in heaven. Nor should we trouble ourselves, as to what class of sinners are referred to by the *sheep* and the *piece of silver*. Both parables have in view our sinful race, wandering away from God and lost to all holiness and happiness, and the joy which the return of one thus lost awakens in the realms of bliss. The sheep may, as Alford thinks, represent a *stupid and bewildered sinner*; the piece of silver, one who is *unconscious of himself and his own real worth*; or they may be regarded perhaps more truthfully, as the costume of the parable. Whatever view may be taken of these minor points, there can be no doubt in the mind of every intelligent reader, that the chief object of both parables is to illustrate and give prominence to God's love, in seeking and reclaiming the lost sinner, and the great joy which his repentance awakens in heaven. The expression *joy in the presence of the angels*, is the same as *joy among the angels*. Corresponding to this is *joy shall be in heaven*, in v. 7. The words corresponding to *more than over ninety and nine just persons*, are here omitted, for the obvious reason that the number *nine* of this parable is so much less than the *ninety-nine* of the preceding one, that it would be a sinking of the subject, to say *more than over nine just persons, &c.*

11-32. We are now introduced to the parable of the PRODIGAL SON, which Stier calls the crown and pearl of all our Lord's parables. Indeed, when we remember that it was spoken by our Lord, who himself came to seek and to save them that are lost—that He knows the depth of infinite love for the sinner, who is perishing far off from those provisions of grace, of which there is such abundant stores—that every one who



angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

11 ¶ And he said, A certain man had two sons :

is unreconciled to God finds his counterpart in this wicked, ungrateful son, who left his father's house and plunged into the abyss of profligacy and dissipation—that upon his first return to his parental home, he was met *while yet a great way off*, and received with a hearty welcome, without one chiding word or allusion even to his unnatural desertion of home and kindred,—when all this and more which may be deduced from this wonderful parable are called to mind, we are almost if not quite justified in saying, that if all the other parables were stricken from the Gospels, this parable of the Prodigal Son alone would suffice to furnish direction and encouragement for every lost sinner on earth, to return unto his Father's house and be forgiven.

In regard to the interpretation of this parable, while there is an admirable adaptation of all the parts to the condition of the sinner, wandering away from his Heavenly Father, and seeking to gratify the wants of his immortal nature with the husks of sin, yet we are not to lose sight of the great central truth of this parabolic representation, which is the readiness of God to receive the repenting, returning sinner, however aggravated his sins and wretched his condition. The picture is not here, as in the preceding parables, one, in which divine love goes forth in quest of the wanderer; but is the history of the sinner's own acts from the time when he first leaves his Father's house, and descends through all the successive stages of sinful indulgence to the very depths of degradation and want, to the period when he is led to reflect upon his distressed condition, and resolves to return unto his Father. This resolution he puts into execution, and is received with open arms by Him from whom he had so long wandered. From that point, this parable, in the joyful welcome with which the prodigal is received, flows into the *Likewise I say unto you*, of the parables of the *lost sheep* and *piece of silver*, and expands and illus-

trates the joy, which is there so gloriously but concisely expressed. Thus all three of the parables converge to the same great truth, that there is joy in heaven over the repenting sinner.

This parable then is a narrative, simple and consistent in its details, related of two sons, whose father had ample means to render them both independent of all want, and to furnish them a home beneath the paternal roof. The younger, however, possessed of a wild and ungovernable desire to be his own master, requested and received his share of the estate, left his aged parent, and went off to a distant country with no expectation or design of ever returning. There he rioted in sensuality, and indulged in such prodigal expenditure, that he wasted his whole patrimony, after which he was reduced to the laborious and ignoble employment of a swineherd. In rags, wretchedness, and such extreme hunger, that he would gladly have shared the food of the swine committed to his care, he came at last to himself. Reason, dethroned for a season by the intoxication of sensual pleasure, now resumed its seat. He began to reflect upon his unfilial conduct, how deaf he had been to the entreaties and blind to the tears of his father. He contrasted the happy situation of the hired servants at his father's house, with his extreme destitution. The thought of home and its comforts inspired him with hope, and aroused him to action. He resolved to return at once to his father, and with words of confession and deep abasement, to request, not the former place of honor and exemption from personal labor, but the position of a hired servant. Emaciated and weakened with hunger, he set out upon his journey. How unlike the gay, thoughtless youth, who had before travelled that same road with the intent of being as far as possible from his father. Broken-hearted, penitent, and humbled, he draws nigh to the home of his childhood. His heart beats quick, as he sees at a

12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that fall-

eth to me. And he divided unto them <sup>his</sup> living.

f Ma. 12 : 44.

distance the well-known fields, and catches a glimpse of his father's house. What thoughts crowd upon his mind! Is his father yet alive? Will he receive the returning prodigal? We should hardly dare to presume this, did the wondrous narrative stop here. But the father "saw him when he was yet a great way off." He had gone forth from his dwelling. His thoughts were upon his absent son. His eye rested upon the place, where the prodigal disappeared from his sight, when he turned his back upon his father's house. And when he sees him approaching in the distance, his bowels are moved with compassion, and he runs and falls upon his neck and kisses him. He waits not to hear his request to be numbered with the hired servants, but commands the best robe to be put upon him, and shoes on his feet, and the fatted calf to be killed, and his household to celebrate his son's return with feasting and merriment.

Such is the outline of this parable spoken by Jesus to illustrate the abounding grace of God, in His readiness to receive and pardon the sinner, who comes to Him in penitence and love. We will now proceed to explain it more in detail.

11. *A certain man.* He was evidently a substantial householder, like the man who made a great supper (14 : 16, 21). In the application he must be referred to God our Father, who is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself (2 Cor. 5 : 19). *Had two sons.* Expositors in general refer this to the Jews and Gentiles. There are many analogies to support this view, but I would refer the elder son primarily to the Pharisees, who, in their self-righteous spirit, found fault with Jesus for receiving and eating with the publicans and sinners. See further Note on v. 25.

12. *The younger of them.* The doating fondness of a father for his youngest son, is proverbial. Hence it enhances the wickedness of this son, that,

ungrateful for the many tokens of a father's fondness, he deserted him in his declining years. *The portion of goods, &c., i. e. my share of the estate.* A Jewish as well as a Roman father, was bound to divide his estate equally among his children, except that the eldest was entitled to two shares. There was no law against making this division before the father's death. The word rendered *goods*, would be better and more literally translated by *substance* (as in v. 13), for it refers not simply to personal property, but to real estate. He demanded his share of all the property, both landed and personal, and hence, when he had spent all in riotous living, he had nothing prospective, on which he could depend for subsistence. This made his case at that time the more deplorable. *And he divided, &c.* As the father was under no compulsion to do this, we may well infer that this was not the first time, that the younger son had made this undutiful request. He had no doubt for some time given indications of increasing discontent, and had been expostulated with and warned of his evil course by his father. But finding all his efforts to save him unavailing, he divides unto his sons *his living*. By this latter expression, which literally signifies *his life*, is to be understood all his means of subsistence. Nothing was concealed or retained in the division. All this bespeaks the kind, generous, indulgent father. In regard to the portion which fell to the other son, the father seems to have retained possession of it, although it was understood, according to the terms of this division, as the property of the elder son (see v. 31), to be given him on the demise of the father, or at such time as the infirmities of age should prevent his personal superintendence of the affairs of the estate. Stier thinks that in lieu of the landed property, "the proper *paternal inheritance*" in which the elder son was secured, the younger had in compensation

13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into

his portion dealt out to him, and that thus all else that belonged to the father remained to the elder, yet as a son in the house *with his father*, so that he could yet dispose of it at his pleasure.

13. *Not many days after.* A litotes for *very soon after*. A little time would be necessary for converting his share of the estate into money or treasures, which he could carry with him. The words, *he gathered all together*, are to be referred to his converting all his possessions into a portable form. He collected together *all* he was the owner of. He left nothing whatever, upon which he could fall back for support, in case he should come to want, in the distant land to which he was about to go. His heartless, selfish, improvident character, is seen in the whole transaction. *Took his journey*, &c. See N. on Matt. 21: 33 (end). This was why he wished to possess himself of his share of the estate, before his father's death. He wished to leave his home, where parental advice and example acted in the way of restraint to his depraved inclinations. It was not, therefore, the mere desire to possess property, which he might call his own, but to have the means to gratify his unbridled passions, that prompted him to demand a division of the estate before his father's decease. *Into a far country*, or *into a country far off*. Here is exhibited the spirit of apostasy and departure into open sin. Augustine says, "the distant region is forgetfulness of God." This is the straying away of the lost sheep, with the additional idea of wilful desertion and guilt. *Wasted*; literally, *scattered, dissipated*, reference being had to the thoughtless extravagance, with which he squandered away his means in vicious indulgence. *His substance*. The same word employed in v. 12, and there rendered *goods*. The repetition is designed to give prominence to the idea, that he squandered away the very inheritance which he had received from his father. It would have been

a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all,

supposed that the thought of the parental love, which had provided him with this rich inheritance, would have made him careful and provident, at least so far as his patrimony was concerned. But his prodigality, however, spared not even that, but scattered it to the winds. We see thus the force of the reflexive pronoun in the original, not preserved in our common version, *his own substance*, i. e. even the patrimony, which through the kindness of his father had become *his own* property. Thus the sinner abuses and consumes on his own lusts, the very gifts and mercies of God, which were designed to lead him to repentance (Rom. 2: 4). *With riotous living*. The original word is of much stronger import, in a *self-destroying manner* being its etymological signification. The corresponding adjective is used by Aristotle (Eth. IV. 1), of one *who perishes or comes to ruin through his own means*. Hence it denotes the excess of prodigality, into which one falls, who has no concern for his own affairs, but recklessly plunges into extravagance and dissipation. Such a one is more seldom reclaimed, than he who is the victim of the arts of others, and whose profligate course, in his more sober moments of reflection, he himself condemns.

14. Thus far his sinful career is described. It was one of extreme profligacy and insensibility to every thing virtuous or ennobling. We have now brought to view his consequent degradation and misery. *When he had spent all*. No property is so vast, which a life of profligacy will not in the end exhaust. The verb *had spent*, is so generally used of necessary expenses, that we must take it here in an ironical sense, for squandering in useless extravagances. We have in this word, and *wasted*, in v. 13, the antithesis of the preceding *collected together*. He converted all his effects into money, on the eve of his departure, as though he was intending to employ it in some great

there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that coun-

business operation; he squanders it in this far country, as though it was of no value whatever. *There arose a mighty famine, &c.* Here is a twofold evil. His poverty comes upon him at the very time when there is a scarcity of the necessary means of subsistence. Had the country abounded with provisions, he could have obtained sufficient for his wants by his personal labor. But famine and poverty combined, brought him down to the very depths of destitution and distress. *In that land;* more literally, *throughout that country.* The famine was so extensive as well as severe, as to preclude all hope of relief from the hand of benevolence, or by wandering from one place to another, which the famine had not reached, or where it was less severe. *He began to be in want.* His destitution waxed greater and greater, until he had nothing left on which to live, and he must either starve, or enter into some man's service as a day-laborer. The pronoun *he*, is emphatic in the original, the sense being *even he*, brought up in the midst of plenty, as he had been, and so recently having left his father's house loaded with wealth.

15. *He went forth from his haunts of vice and dissipation.* This may be regarded, in a measure, as the turning-point in his history of shame and want. He resolved to work rather than starve. Hard labor is far more conducive to reflection and reformation of character, than a life of ease and self-indulgence. In the application of the parable, this is generally referred to the blind and persistent efforts, which the sinner, when first he begins to feel the burden of sin, makes to relieve himself, and which only issues in his increased wretchedness. But this process which only serves to display to himself his utter helplessness, is sometimes necessary to bring him to a more deep sense of his need of Christ. *Joined himself, i. e.*

try; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks

became a servant. The verb in the original signifies the closest coherence, as of things glued together, and refers here to the absolute servitude and dependence, to which the prodigal had become reduced. *To feed swine.* This was deemed an ignoble employment among all nations, and especially by the Jews, to whom swine was an abomination.

16. *Would fain have filled;* literally, *desired earnestly to fill,* i. e. he was glad to fill his stomach with the food here spoken of. Many mistake the verb to signify his *ungratified* desire for even this coarse food. But the same verb is used of Lazarus (16: 21), who "*was desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table;*" where it is evident that he did actually eat of these crumbs or broken victuals, and that reference was not had to an ungratified desire. The word rendered *husks*, is not to be taken of the husks or pods of fruit, but of the fruit itself of the *carib* or *Kharúb* tree, the pods of which contain a sweetish pulp and several small seeds like beans. Dr. Thomson (*Land and Book*, vol i. p. 22) thus describes this fruit: "The husks"—a mis-translation—are fleshy pods somewhat like those of the honey-locust-trees, from six to ten inches long and one broad, lined inside with a gelatinous substance, not wholly unpleasant to the taste when thoroughly ripe. I have seen large orchards of this Kharúb in Cyprus, where it is still the food which the swine do eat. In Cyprus, Asia Minor, and the Grecian Islands, you will see full-grown trees bending under half a ton of green pods." It would not be surprising, therefore, that in a state of extreme hunger, the poorer classes ate these pods, in order to extract some nourishment therefrom. They must, however, have been unsatisfying to the craving appetite, even when the stomach was filled with them. Hence the

that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired

servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my

prodigal, in contrasting his condition with that of his father's hired servants, represents himself as perishing with hunger. *And no man gave unto him.* A better translation would be, *for no man, &c.* It evidently contains the reason why he was obliged to have recourse to such food as is here described. The whole passage may then be rendered: 'He was glad to fill his stomach with the food given to the swine, for no one (in this state of extreme scarcity of food) gave him (worthless, wretch as he was) any thing to eat.'

17. Here commences the second part of the parable. All that precedes has been descriptive of the downward career of this prodigal. Of a roving, restless, rebellious temperament, he had rudely demanded a premature division of his father's estate, had deserted the home of his childhood, and having gone afar off, had plunged into such scenes of profligacy and debauchery, that all his property was wasted, and himself reduced to actual want. Now the return of this wretched youth to virtue and happiness is related. *When he came to himself* (literally, *into himself*, as though he had been out of his mind), i. e. when his reason returned, which through sensual indulgence had been for a time impaired or beclouded. "The most dreadful torment of the lost, in fact, that which constitutes their state of torment, will be this *coming to themselves*, when too late for repentance." Alford. This was the first step or stage in the return of the prodigal. He began to reflect upon his lost condition. His past life and present wretchedness came up before him. His heart now turns with longing desire to his father's house. He does not think of the place he formerly occupied as a son, but reverts to the *hired servants*, to which class of persons he himself now belongs. *How many hired servants, &c., i. e. many as are my father's*

hired servants, they all have bread in abundance. In the application of the parable, the *hired servants* are not to be pressed to teach some spiritual truth. The words belong to the general framework of the parable, to give it life and consistency. *Enough and to spare*; literally, *a superabundance of bread*. This shows that the famine had not reached the country where lived his father. There are abundant provisions of grace in the gospel, and no one need fear, that he will be left to spiritual want, if he return to his Father's house. *Bread* stands here in strong contrast with the miserable and unsatisfying food, upon which he was then subsisting. *And I perish.* Better, *I am perishing*. He was entering upon the very stage of starvation. The food which he was eating, served little else than to distend the stomach, supplying inadequate nourishment to support life. Certain death was before him, unless his wants were relieved. The consciousness of this led him to look elsewhere for the means of subsistence, and what place so naturally presented itself to his mind, now restored to its healthful condition, as his father's house? Thus the sinner must feel how desperate is his case, before he will apply to Christ for pardon.

18. Now we have the prodigal's resolution to arise and go to his father. The words, *I will arise and go* (literally, *having arisen I will go*), are in accordance with the oriental fulness of expression. Alford presses this too far, in referring its interpretation to the words "was dead and is alive again." The simple beauty and consistency of the parable is marred by the attempts of interpreters to make each and every incident expressive of some great truth. The sole idea intended here is the resolution formed by the prodigal to return to his father's house, which, in v. 20, was put into execution. *Father.* The

father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

utterance of this word was quite unlike the hypocritical use of it in v. 12. The prodigal still claims the relation of son, although he acknowledges his desert to be treated only as a hired servant. It is strange that Trench should press this simple and natural incident, to teach that the ground of the sinner's confidence, that God will not repel or cast him out, is the adoption of sonship which he received in Christ Jesus at his baptism, and his faith that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance." The parable in all its gracious import and terms of expression, may be appropriated to himself by every impenitent sinner who will come to Christ, whether he have been previously the subject of parental consecration to God by baptism or otherwise. All may return to their Father's house, and use these very words of the prodigal, without fear of trenching on language which is thus claimed as the peculiar inheritance of those who have been inducted into God's visible family at the baptismal font. No restriction or limitation at all of this kind exists in the parable. It belongs in all its fulness of love, to the whole human family; and every sinner on earth of whatever nation, condition, or previous religious belief, may say, if he will, *Father, I have sinned*. The words, *against heaven*, belong simply to the parable. The sin against the human father, was also *against heaven*, i. e. against God, whose holy law the prodigal had broken in forsaking his father, and in his subsequent life of sinful indulgence. But in the application of the parable, *before Thee* becomes the language addressed to God; and *against heaven* implies the violation of all the laws, ordinances, and principles of order and obedience, which regulate and control the blessed intelligences of heaven. This order of the words in the parable is therefore very significant. *Against heaven* precedes *before thee*, the sin of the prodigal

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

gal being principally *against God*, and therefore having the prominent position. But in its application, in order to bring out this same great truth, which finds its illustration in the penitential confession of David (Ps. 51: 4), the terms are to be inverted, and *before Thee* precedes the clause *against heaven*, which, as above stated, may refer to the angelic host, against whose confirmed order and obedience the returning penitent feels that he has sinned.

19. *And am no more worthy, &c.* He does not abjure or even ignore his sonship, but only denies his worthiness to be recognized as such. So in the next clause, we have not, *make me one of thy hired servants*, but *make me as one, &c.* This is also seen in his repetition of the word *father* (in vs. 17, 18, 21). For the first time a filial spirit is awakened within him, and although the terms of his request look to his being treated only as a hired servant, yet there is evidently a yearning desire to be received again to the paternal bosom of his father, so that he may share in his affection, if not retain the position which he formerly occupied as the younger son. *No more* should have been translated *no longer*, there being in the word a retrospective glance at the time when he was acknowledged and treated as a son, of which privilege he deems himself now no longer worthy. There lies hidden in these words, therefore, the most tender and artless appeal to parental love, which an erring son could make; a reference to those happy days, when he enjoyed his father's love and confidence, now passed away, to return no more, as his only hope and plea is to be made as one of the hired servants. His deep sense of guilt, in having so ill treated his father, was now the burden of his soul, and hence, *Father, I have sinned, &c.*, is the language, which is first upon his lips, when he is forming his resolution to return. *One* has here the sense of any

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But 'when he was yet a great way off, his father

g Ac. 2: 39; Ep. 2: 12, 17.

one. In regard to *hired servants*, see Note on v. 17.

20. *And he arose and came to* (i. e., towards, or on his way to) *his father*. These words happily express the promptness and decision with which he carried his resolution into action. He did not pause to bid a formal adieu to the companions of his guilty pleasures; he cast back no lingering look, like Lot's wife, upon the scene of his folly and ruin. His eye is firmly set upon his home. He arises, leaves his swine, and all things pertaining to his ignoble duty and service, and proceeds at once towards his father's house. Such must be the prompt decision of every impenitent sinner, who would hope for the joyful welcome to his Father's house, which the prodigal here received. *But when, &c.* "This reaches very far back, —though this could not be clearly introduced in the case of the figurative human father—not only to the first good resolution of the son, but actually that first far off in v. 13, which this latter seems to echo. We must push our interpretation beyond the parable, and regard it as being said that the Father had seen the son in all his wanderings, and at his utmost distance, having accompanied him everywhere by his unwearied grace." Stier. The words here made use of are very suggestive. In addition to what Stier has so well and truly said, it may be remarked that the father's feelings in view of the absence of his son, are here disclosed. *He saw him when he was yet a great way off.* It is as though we were told, that day after day, he had ascended some eminence, or took some position where he could see far off in the distance, in hope to catch a view of his son returning from his wanderings. But although each day brings disappointment, yet once more he turns his eyes in the direction, whence he might expect his approach. He sees him at a great dis-

saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him,

tance. His feeble step, emaciated form, and tattered garments, cannot prevent his recognition by the eye of parental love, even when he is yet a great way off. "The marvellous seeing of the Father is a *drawing* too: it excited in this poor son's mind the thought, He sees me, and regards me, as a father. It was as if the atmosphere of paternal love already began to compass him about." Stier. *And had compassion*. See N. on Matt. 9: 36. Affection for the wanderer had never been lost, and now at sight of him in such a forlorn condition, it is awakened to the highest exercise, *and he ran and fell* (literally, *having run he fell*) *upon his neck and kissed him*. He did not wait to hear his son's confession, or stop to chide him for his cruel desertion of home and friends. The words *fell upon his neck* (see Gen. 45: 14), refer to the act of embrace with which he greeted his son. At this point of pardon and embracing love, the parable synchronizes with the sheep restored to the fold, and the piece of silver found by the woman. The previous process, as has been remarked in Preliminary Observations, is concurrent in all the parables; only in those of the "lost sheep" and the "piece of silver," the outgoings of Infinite love in behalf of the wandering sinner are designated; while in the Prodigal Son, the sinner's own process in the act of repentance is described. But now the parables unite in illustrating the joy which the sinner's return awakens among all the blessed spirits above.

21. The son, in the spirit of true and humble penitence, is not prevented by the kiss of reconciliation, from repeating the words of confession, which he had resolved to utter. The beautiful picture would have been marred, had he faltered in his purpose of full and open confession, in consequence of this outburst of paternal love. Various rea-

Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

A Pa. 51 : 4.

sons have been assigned for the omission of the concluding words of his intended confession. The more general opinion is, that his father did not wait to hear all which he had to say, but interrupted his confession with the directions in v. 22. So Webster and Wilkinson: "The humiliating petition to be made one of the hired servants was intercepted by his father's summons to his domestic servants to do him honor." That the omission has a deep significance no one can doubt. The question is how far parental love, wrought up to its highest exercise, would permit the joyful occasion to be interrupted by confessions and humble acknowledgments of personal unworthiness on the part of the son. There would be a manifest propriety in listening to the confession of personal ill-desert, but not to the request for so degraded a position as that of a hired servant. It would have detracted from our favorable regard for the father, had he coolly listened to such a request from his long-lost and beloved son. In an æsthetic view, therefore, it would have ill comported with the joyous occasion, for this portion of the intended confession to have been spoken. But as has been remarked, there is a deeper reason for this, in the very nature of the relation, re-established and confirmed by the kiss of forgiveness which the father gave the son. This was the conferral of the spirit of adoption, by which the son could only cry *Abba, Father*. Words expressive of the relation of a hired servant to *such* a father, his swelling emotions, at the thought of the sonship to which he knew he had been restored, forbade him to utter. The father, on the one hand, would not have listened to this request from his son; and on the other, the son could not ask for this servile position, with such evidence of his father's love, and such

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

newly awakened emotions of filial affection in his own bosom. The presence of that clause would have marred the whole scene. Its absence shows that all slavish fear, on the part of the son, was dispelled by the cordial reception he had met with, and that no relation other than that of father and son, was hereafter to subsist between them. Stier refers this to the entire abandonment of the son to nought but grace, which caused him to withhold the unwise offer of himself to hired service. Had this eminent expositor gone a step further, and referred it also to the filial love of the son, awakened at this time to such strength and tenderness, that the relation of a servant was repugnant to all his feelings, he would have given a more exact expression of the reason, why he omitted this request.

22. Bengel well remarks, that the father replies to the confession of the son, in the direction here given to the servants. The depth of the father's love is indicated in the haste with which he gave orders to have his son arrayed in more becoming attire. *Bring forth the best robe* (literally, *the first or chief robe*), and *put it on him*, &c. These words give open expression to what was implied in the kiss of forgiveness, that he was fully reinstated to his former position as a son, although in his own estimation he had forfeited all claims to be regarded as such. The articles of clothing and ornament here mentioned, are such as denoted *freedom*, and dignity of position, and are designedly mentioned, as contrasting with the servile station, which the prodigal was expecting to fill. The verb *bring forth*, indicates that the arrayal of the lost son is to take place in presence of the whole family, in order that all may see how fully reinstated he is in the affections of the father. *A ring*; literally, *a finger-ring*, the be-



23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead,

stowal of which was regarded as a mark of honor, or a symbol of elevation to some high post or dignity. See Gen. 41:42; Esth. 3:10, 12; Jer. 22:24; Dan. 6:10. That the ring was a mark of honorable station and position, is seen also from James 2:2. The putting this ring upon the prodigal's hand was therefore full of significancy, and showed that he was restored to the honors and privileges of sonship, which he had forfeited by his prodigal and licentious life. The application of this to the robe of Christ's righteousness (Isa. 61:10), by which the sinner is justified in the sight of God, is too obvious to require more than its bare mention. The ring and the shoes denote that his condition is no longer one of bondage to sin and death, but that he is elevated to the dignity of a freeman in Christ, and even more, to all the immunities and privileges of the sons of God, 1 John 3:1. It is worthy of remark, that slaves in early times, as a general thing, went barefoot. The shoes put upon the feet of the prodigal, signified that he was no longer in the state of servitude, indicated by the wretched garb in which he returned to his father's house.

23. *The fatted calf.* Eastern hospitality always had in a state of readiness, a calf or some such animal, to be slaughtered and served up. See Gen. 18:7; 41:2; 1 Sam. 16:20; 28:24; 2 Sam. 6:13. Dr. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. ii. p. 162) says that now "among unsophisticated Arabs, the killing of a sheep, calf, or kid in honor of a visitor is strictly required by their laws of hospitality, and the neglect of it is keenly resented." *Let us eat, and be merry;* literally, *having eaten, let us be merry.* The merriment was such as was connected with feasting. See 12:19. Music both vocal and instrumental, the dance (see v. 25), lively and agreeable conversation, wit, humor, repartee,

and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

† V. 32; Ep. 2:1; & 5:14; Ro. 3:1.

marked these scenes of joyous festivity. Here this parable coincides with the joy, with which the recovery of the lost sheep (v. 6) and the finding of the piece of silver (v. 9) were celebrated. The killing of the fatted calf is too obviously a portion of the mere framework of the parable, to be forced, as it appears to be by Stier, to symbolize the "heavenly material substance," the expression of household joy above.

24. *This my son.* An open and explicit acknowledgment, that the prodigal is restored to sonship. *Was dead,* i. e. was to me as one dead. It might be well said of one, so lost to all virtue and moral excellence, that he was dead. Indeed, a thousand deaths of the body are not to be compared with that moral death, which such a course of sinful indulgence proves to have taken place. Well might it be said of one, who like this prodigal has come back to his father's house, that *he was dead and is alive again.* No language could better express the depths of sin and misery, from which the sinner is reclaimed, and the new, peaceful, happy life which he begins to live, when he has returned and received the forgiveness of his Heavenly Father. *Was lost* in all that pertains to virtue and happiness. This verse is constructed according to the manner of Hebrew poetry, there being a parallelism between the members. *Began to be merry.* This merry-making took place at the close of the feast. See N. on v. 23. In this joyful celebration, the son himself doubtless participated, and in this there was a great advance on the preceding parables, the lost sheep and piece of money being insensible of the joy, which their recovery had inspired.

25. In contrast with the joyful scene within doors, is the cold and selfish conduct of the elder brother, who, returning from the field of labor, and hearing the sounds of festivity and mirth, in-

25. Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and

drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

quires of a servant the cause of it, and on hearing that it is occasioned by the return of his brother, is so displeased that he even refuses to enter the house. This conduct on the part of the elder brother, has given much trouble to those expositors, who are curious to know what every circumstance of the parable teaches, not discriminating between the costume or framework of the story, and the points on which the illustration or great central truth depends. On the one hand, his remaining in his father's house and service, indicates that he was possessed of true righteousness; on the other hand, his selfish and invidious conduct in regard to his brother, and his overbearing language to his father, would seem to betray a want of the essential characteristic of a good man. These conflicting points in his character, have rendered the determination of the question, as to what position in the application of the parable shall be assigned him, one of much difficulty. Some have regarded him as a type of the angels in heaven. But his envious, fault-finding, undutiful conduct on this occasion, does not at all comport with the benignant love and tenderness of the angelic host towards men (see 2: 10-14), depicted so emphatically in vs. 7, 10. Besides, to maintain consistency, the joy within doors, corresponding to the assemblage of friends and neighbors in the preceding parables, must symbolize the "joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." How then can this elder son in his solitary selfishness, signify the blessed angels, who fill heaven with praise and jubilant joy, on the conversion of a single lost sinner? "It is a most marvellous conceit which founds upon the mystery of this parable, the notion of an elder son in heaven, who thus satanically murmurs at the restoration of the human race, as exhibited in the younger son's history." Stier. Nor can this elder brother be referred to the Jews, as a nation always stiff-necked, proud, and

rebellious. The nation always comprised many truly good persons. Even in the awful apostasy, in the time of Elijah, there were seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to Baal (1 Kings 19: 18). At this very time when our Lord uttered this parable, he was surrounded by a band of faithful, loving disciples, who were Jews, and the publicans and sinners, for whose special encouragement the parable was spoken, were of the same nation. The reference cannot therefore be to the Jews as a people. A *class* of persons is evidently referred to, and what class so readily suggests itself, and has so many characteristics in common with this cold, unfeeling, selfish son, who could boast of his good deeds, and parade them one by one in contrast with the faults of his erring brother (see 18: 11, 12) as those whom our Lord was at this very time addressing, the scribes and Pharisees? They were ostensibly doers of righteousness. They remained in the observance of the letter of the law. In their self-righteous spirit, they would not hesitate to say, "neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment." Compare 18: 11, 12. They were at this very time murmuring at the love and condescension of our Lord towards the publicans and sinners, of whom the prodigal was the confessed type. Is it objected to this, that the righteousness of the elder son was real, while that of the scribes and Pharisees was feigned and hypocritical? But what evidence have we of the reality of the elder son's righteousness, except what is furnished in his own boastful Pharisaic professions? What confidence can we place in his arrogant claims to perfect obedience, when we take into view the damaging circumstances brought to light in his envious and unfeeling conduct in regard to his brother, and his contumacious treatment of his father? His righteousness is presented to us in a subjective sense; that is, he appeared to himself perfect in all respects, having never once vio-

lated his father's command. Nothing more is here intended. The silence or apparent acquiescence of the father in the son's boastful claim to perfect obedience, furnishes no evidence of its truth. See further in the Note on v. 31. It would not have comported with the simple nature and design of the parable, for the father to have contradicted his assumption of perfect obedience, or read him a homily on the sins of envy, selfishness, pride, arrogance. The reply of the father is singularly prudent and cautious. He ignores the arrogant pretensions of the elder son, and simply refers to the division of the estate which had been previously made, and which was to remain intact. The property all belonged to the elder son, and with this arrangement the return of the younger was not to interfere. He then tenderly refers to the propriety of celebrating the occasion of the brother's return; and there, so far as the parable is concerned, the matter rests. What is there in all this that militates against the view, that this proud and boastful son possessed only a legal or external righteousness, and that he truly and fitly represents that class of persons found in every age, and especially in great numbers in the time of our Lord. If it be said that these two sons represent the whole human family, and must therefore refer to the division of the Jews and Gentiles, we may reply that the division of unregenerate men into the two classes of the openly wicked or those who make no pretensions to piety, and the formalists, who put on the mask of external respect for the divine law, but are inwardly corrupt and rebellious, would be equally as well defined, and certainly more consonant with the general design of the parable, which was to reprove the scribes and Pharisees, for their ill-natured murmurings at his intercourse with the publicans and sinners (v. 2).

Now, more literally *but*, designed to mark the contrast between this and the preceding context. *In the field*, engaged in the duties of superintending the farm. He rendered external ser-

vice to his father, but was wanting in true respect and obedience (see v. 29). The field must have been some distance from the house, or this son would have received some earlier intimation of what was going on. All this is in excellent keeping with the general design of the parable. There was such great joy throughout the house, that the elder son was temporarily overlooked, and he had received no notice of the return of his brother. This harmonizes with the sentiment of v. 7, and also with what is implied in v. 9. Thus the three parables flow on in parallel directions, the streams at times approaching one another, so near as to almost mingle their waters, and then again diverging, until at last they all unite in one great channel of love and joy; or, to change the figure, peal forth one great choral song of rejoicing, the burden of which is, "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again, he was lost and is found."

*He came and drew nigh*; literally, *as coming he drew nigh*, i. e. as he was approaching the house. The form of the words are expressive of his gradual approach. *Music*; literally, a *symphony* or *concert* of musical instruments. *Dancing*. The music was of that kind, which he knew to be accompanied with the dance. Hence both *music* and *dancing* are joined to the verb *heard*, which properly belongs only to the first. The feast was probably ended, and music and the dance succeeded, as was usual at ancient entertainments. The musicians and dancers were hired on such occasions, unless, as in the present instance, the household was large enough to furnish its own performers. We have in Homer an account of a feast, in which music, both vocal and instrumental, with the dance, was continued the residue of the day, "until the setting sun." Dr. Thomson (*Land and Book*, vol. ii. p. 579) says of the people of Palestine that "at weddings, birth-days, and all other festal gatherings, music is their chief entertainment; and they will beat the der-

26. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy

brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

bekkeh, thrum the deff, rattle the castanets, and clap their hands in concert, without intermission until long after midnight."

26. *And he called, &c.* Instead of entering the house, as his position in the family would have justified, and learning by personal observation the cause of this unwonted joy, he calls one of the servants, and seeks information from him. His cool and calculating selfishness betrays itself in this little incident, and prepares us for its outburst in vs. 28, 29. Wilkinson and Webster remark, "that there are three words for servants in the parable, *hired servants, servants, and footboys* [or *lackeys*, the word employed in this verse], denoting the wealth of the father." *What these things meant* (literally, *might be*), i. e. what was the occasion of this festivity and joy.

27. *Thy brother is come.* The hearty, straightforward terms of the reply, show that this servant shared in the general feeling of joy at the prodigal's return, and supposed that its simple announcement would fill the heart of the elder son with like emotions. Hence he employs the expressions, *thy brother*, and *thy father*, on the natural supposition, that the elder son, whose ill-humor the time and manner of his question probably indicated, would be propitiated thereby and unite in the general rejoicing. *Hath killed for him, &c.* No mention is made of the robe, shoes, and ring, with which the son had been adorned and honored, but only of the fatted calf, the serving of which upon the table was more immediately associated with the sounds of mirth, which had fallen upon the ear of the elder brother. *Safe and sound*; literally, *in a healthful condition*. Webster and Wilkinson refer this reply of the servant, which so fully expressed the occasion of rejoicing, to the disposition of everybody to sneer at the

penitent, or any one who is promoted contrary to expectation or beyond desert. But aside from the evident participation in the general joy which this servant manifested, as above remarked, the word has not the feeble signification assigned it by those eminent expositors. To receive a beloved son, who had long been absent, *alive and well*, would be the great cause of thankfulness to God, in reference to which all else would be quite subordinate. Especially would this be so, when, as here, the return of the prodigal was unlooked for and unexpected. I regard the words of this servant, however, as looking to a deeper signification than mere bodily life and health. He must have been aware of the reconciliation of the father and son. As the latter was being arrayed in a manner befitting his rank, which, as we have remarked (N. on v. 22), was done before the whole household, there could not have been a servant so unobserving, as not to see in his calm, humble, affectionate demeanor towards his parent, that he was possessed of a different mind or disposition from that which he had when he left home. This constituted his chief life and health, in the eyes of the father and servants, and to this change of disposition reference is most unquestionably had in the words of the servant. The word, in its most literal and simple sense, *in health or healthy*, is admirably adapted to express the healthful condition of the prodigal's mind, as well as his body, and was by no means the "very feeble word," which Webster and Wilkinson declare it to be. To this same idea the father refers, in the words *was dead and is alive again*, which cannot be predicated of the body, since it had not been dead and restored to life, but of the moral nature of the prodigal "dead in trespasses and sin," and now renewed to a state of holy obedience and love.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him.

29 And he answering said to

his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never

28. *He was angry.* If his hesitation to enter the house resulted, as some think, from his unwillingness to appear before a festive company in the clothes soiled with his day's labor, yet to no such reason can be attributed his anger on the receipt of the intelligence that his brother had returned. The verb, *was angry*, refers in the original to excessive anger, accompanied with a desire for revenge. *Would not* or *was unwilling to go in.* This verb expresses active choice or purpose, and with the negative may be translated *refused to go in.* He gave angry and open expression to this determination. While the house was resounding with music and gladness, he stood without in sullen rage, showing not only his want of brotherly love, but also of sympathy with the joy of his father at the unexpected return of his son. This surely is not indicative of the filial love, which is necessary to vitalize the cold obedience boasted of in v. 29, before it can be received as evidence of the real righteousness of this elder son. *Therefore*, in consequence of his refusal to enter the house, and participate in the common festivities. *Came his father out, &c.* He went forth to meet the prodigal; now he comes out to entreat the elder son to lay aside his anger and enter the house. His happiness was not complete even on the return of the prodigal, while his other son stood without displeased and unhappy. He leaves the company within, intermits his affectionate attentions to his long-lost son, and condescends to go forth and expostulate with the elder brother, and urge him to enter the house. Thus God is no respecter of persons, and would welcome into the kingdom of his grace, the scribes and Pharisees, and all such as are represented by this elder brother, as readily as the publicans and sinners, against his reception of whom they were at this very time murmuring.

"By divine grace there may be human examples of this, although rare; ordinarily no man, as a father, would do this. But thus does the Heavenly Father act; He thus acted at this very time, through the gracious preaching of the Son, through this parable which fell from his lips." Stier.

29. The language of this reply was highly disrespectful to the father, and exhibited the very essence of selfishness. *Do I serve thee.* Although voluntary service is here intended, yet in the heat of his anger, he employs a word, which literally signifies *to be a slave.* Webster and Wilkinson paraphrase it: "Here am I who have been serving thee as a slave." The words *many years* stand opposed to *as soon as*, in v. 30. *Neither transgressed I, &c.* In this profession of invariable obedience, contrasted with the implied disregard of the father's command, evinced by the desertion of the younger son, there is strongly displayed the self-righteous spirit of this elder brother. He boasts of perfect obedience, while at the very time his conduct belies his words, and shows that he was devoid of all true filial respect and moral uprightness. It is well remarked by Stier, that the elder son is now the *lost* one. The grace which had reached even the publicans and sinners, and arrested and turned their footsteps into the path of truth and holiness, was rejected by the Pharisees, and henceforth they were to be regarded as the lost and abandoned of God, while the others were participating in the blessings of the Messianic kingdom. Thus the last were first and the first last. See 13:30. *Thou never gavest me a kid.* Alford remarks that "here, as in the case of the younger son, who had demanded his portion of the estate, there was a separation of the individual son from the father, the very root and ground of sin." The sons should have yielded cheerful and con-

gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath de-

tented service to their father, leaving it with his superior wisdom and well-known parental love, to have disposed his favors upon them as he saw fit. But the one had broken away into open rebellion and sin, and now the other betrays the same contumacious and selfish spirit, in this boast of his faithful and long-continued service, and the charge that his just rights had been withheld from him. Who is not reminded, as he reads this story of paternal love and filial ingratitude, of the divine exclamation by the mouth of the prophet, "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me?" Isa. 1: 2. A *kid* is contemptuously spoken of in contrast with *the fattened calf*, to which it was inferior in value. *With my friends*. He disingenuously implies that the fattened calf had been killed, in order that the younger son might have a merry-making with his friends, which he denies ever to have been done in his own case. But the truth was that the fattened calf had been dressed, in order that the father, elder son, and the whole household might celebrate in a befitting manner their joy at the return of the prodigal, and not that the latter might do this with his own particular friends. The selfish and unamiable character of the elder son, is brought out in full relief by these touches.

30. *As soon* as stands strongly opposed to *these many years* in the preceding verse. Indeed this whole verse responds in strong contrast with the pompous parade of good deeds of the elder son made in v. 29. *This thy son*; literally, *thy son, this*, or *the son of yours, this*, as though he pointed scornfully with his finger towards the house where the younger son then was, when the pronoun in its contemptuous use (see N. on Matt 26: 61) was repeated. There is also a scornful emphasis in the use of *thy son*, as though he had said, he

voured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fattened calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son,

is no brother of *mine*, nor will I acknowledge him as such. With a disposition still further to annoy and distress his father, he adds, *who has devoured* (i. e. squandered) *thy living* (i. e. so much of it as fell to his share) *with harlots*. Alford says that in *thy living* is a covert reproach of his father for having given it to the younger son. The words *with harlots*, are not necessarily implied in the words *with riotous living* (see N. on v. 13). It is rather to be regarded as an envious exaggeration of the faults of his brother, to make his conduct appear in as odious a light as possible. We need give ourselves no trouble, as to how the elder brother came by the knowledge that the younger son had squandered his share of the estate. Stier says, that the servant had not told him this. But this cannot be affirmed, and is not very probable. On the supposition, however, that he was not informed by the servant of the destitution of his brother, would it argue any extraordinary reach of knowledge for him to have divined this, in view of the habits and character of the younger son when he took his departure from home? The cool, calculating shrewdness of this elder brother, would not be at fault, as to the condition in which his profligate brother returned to his father's house. *Thou hast killed for him*, &c. How aptly this responds to the murmurs of the Pharisees and scribes in v. 2. If the elder son was made so angry by the killing of the fattened calf in honor of his brother's return, Stier pleasantly asks, "what will this noble brother say, when he sees the robe of honor, and all its other appurtenances?"

31. *Son*. How tenderly does this contrast with the *behold*, with which the elder son commenced his address. He did not say *father*, but this does not prevent his being addressed by the affectionate title *son*. This is almost beyond the reality of any earthly scene.

thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: <sup>a</sup>for

But not so in its application. God says to all his creatures, "*My son, give me thy heart,*" although his patience and love are wearied by their sin and ingratitude, beyond the power of words to express. *Thou art ever with me*, enjoying my society and receiving constant tokens of my love. In the nature of the case, there cannot be such a concentration of joy over you, as over your once lost, but now restored brother. The word *ever*, is here opposed to *never*, in v. 29. How infinitely does the *ever with me*, transcend the *never gavest me a kid*, in v. 29, to which it evidently stands opposed. *All that I have is thine*. The younger son had received his portion, and could legally claim nothing more. But it would seem, that the elder brother had not yet entered into the full possession of his share, but held it in abeyance. Now the father reasserts his claim, in order to remove all ground of jealousy, that there would now be a second division of the estate. From the fact that there is no open denial of the claims of the son put forth in v. 29, it is thought by some that the boast of perfect obedience there made, was not discordant with the truth. But the silence of the father proves nothing at all on that point. His reply was wisely intended and adapted to avert the wrath and jealousy of his elder-born, and he studiously avoids all reference to the manner or matter of his son's unkind speech. But it is not difficult for us to infer, that this was not the first time, in which the patience and forbearance of this kind father had been tried by the domineering pride and unfilial conduct of this son. Anger like this does not so suddenly and fiercely blaze forth, unless there is a mass of slumbering fire within, ready to burst forth in flames whenever occasion offers.

32. *It was meet*, i. e. right, proper. *That we*. The elder son is affection-

this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

z V. 24.

ately included in this general expression, notwithstanding his contemptuous and sneering words, uttered apparently with the express purpose of wounding the feelings of the father. *For this thy brother*. Again, *thy brother this*, purposely repeated from the *this thy son*, but with different manner, denoting the deepest affection. The elder son had studiously avoided the words *my brother*, but now his father emphatically reminds him of this relation, and by the words *thy brother*, evinces his determination, that the younger son shall enter upon all the relations which he had previously forfeited. We have no intimation whether the kind address of the father was prevalent with the son. It is to be feared, however, from his evident hardness and selfishness of heart, that these efforts were unavailing. This is the more probable from the continued hardness and unbelief of the Pharisees, who seem to have been represented in this parable by the elder brother. I would not press into any prominence that which belongs to the mere costume of a parable, but I am of the opinion, that this elder son plays too important a part in this narrative, to be ignored in the spiritual application, and see no method of interpretation less encumbered with difficulties, than to make him the type of all such as trust in their own righteousness for salvation, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, those living in the time of Christ, or in any other age of the world. Even in the *same person* may exist these frames of mind, according as the "old man" in his self-righteous garb may be in the ascendant, or the "new man" in tears of self-abasement and contrition, may cry from within, *Father, I have sinned*, &c.; which will make his type, in the one case, this proud rebellious son, dwelling on his many years' service, in which he never transgressed his father's commands, and in the other,

the prodigal, returning with penitence and confession of unworthiness to his father's house, from which he had so wickedly wandered away.

### CHAPTER XVI.

1-13. PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD. *Perea*. This parable has been regarded as one involving many difficulties of interpretation, and therefore, as might be expected, has received a variety of interpretations. The great point of difficulty is that our Lord apparently praises and holds up for imitation, the grossly fraudulent conduct of an unfaithful steward, when about to be deprived of his office. But this difficulty results from a threefold mistake. The *first* consists in overlooking or misinterpreting the general scope of the parable, considered in relation to those which preceded it in the foregoing chapter. The process of salvation in God's provisions for the recovery of the sinner—in the goings forth of His infinite grace to seek and bring him back to the fold from whence he has strayed away—and in the part which the sinner himself performs in the return to his Father's house, is the theme of these preceding parables. Now our Lord brings out and enforces the necessity of vigor, energy, and promptness of action, in regard to the attainment of the blessings of salvation. Feebleness of effort, vacillating purpose, and indecision in regard to the execution of that which is planned, are the faults against which this parable is directed. The *second* error in the interpretation of this passage, consists in supposing the lord of the steward to commend his dishonesty, whereas it is simply and solely his shrewdness, energy, and promptness of decision and action in making provision for his future support, which was praised. In the application, a like energy and prudent forethought is to be exercised by the children of light, that they may be received into everlasting habitations. The *third* error, which has been a fruitful source of difficulty, is the misinterpretation of the phrase, *mammon of unrighteousness*, which from the parable has been explained to mean *fraud-*

*ulent or ill-gotten gains*. According to this mode of interpretation, wealth thus acquired is to be so used, that when life on this earth is ended, the soul may be admitted into mansions of happiness in heaven. Of this interpretation Doddridge well remarks: "Nothing can be more contrary to the whole genius of the Christian religion, than to imagine that our Lord would exhort men to lay out their ill-gotten goods in works of charity, when justice so evidently required that they should make restitution to the utmost of their abilities." The expression takes its form from the language of the parable. But what is the exact point of comparison or resemblance between the action of the unjust steward and the course of conduct recommended to the children of light? Not surely his fraudulent and unjust doings. Not the doing of evil that good may come. (Rom. 3:8.) The end never sanctifies the means. But the point of comparison is simply this, and here lies the central truth of the parable: as the unjust steward by his prudence, energy, and promptness of action, made provision for his future wants, before he was deprived of his stewardship, so were those, whom our Lord addressed, who in a higher sense were all stewards and unfaithful ones too, when weighed in the balance of strict justice, to so discharge their stewardship—called here the *mammon* or *riches of unrighteousness*, from the well-known and universal fact, that riches constitute the main object of present pursuit, and the love of which is the root of all evil (1 Tim. 6:10)—that when called to an account for it, they might be approved of God and received into everlasting habitations (see Matt. 25:21, 23). As the steward by his shrewd and prompt action, extracted a future living from his unfaithful stewardship, so we, in the exercise of wisdom, prudence, and energy, are to so use our own stewardship—the duties of which in the sight of God are far more unfaithfully discharged than that of this unjust steward, and it is therefore rightly termed the *unrighteous mammon*—as to achieve out of it provision for the fu-



## CHAPTER XVI.

AND he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain

ture wants of our own souls. This includes, of course, the proper management and disposition of property; the generic idea, however, being the right and faithful use of *all* the gifts and opportunities of usefulness which we here enjoy. This seems to me to be the simple point of the parable, and if kept fully in view, will render the interpretation of the parts comparatively plain and easy. Further light will be thrown upon the general design and scope of the parable, in the exposition of the words upon which we shall now enter.

1. *And he said also.* The connective words in the original, show clearly that our Lord pronounced this parable at the same time with those of the preceding chapter. We are justified, however, from the very idea of stewardship, in regarding it as addressed to his disciples, although doubtless in the hearing of the publicans and others, who had gathered around him. Those who, in the preceding parables, are regarded as being *found* and restored to their Father's favor and protection, are now taught how they are to fulfil the obligations and duties growing out of their new relationship to God. The entrance upon the divine life is the theme of the preceding parables; the duty and ultimate reward of active fidelity, constitute the theme of the one before us. The connection is therefore close and obvious between the two chapters. *A certain rich man.* Much has been said and written, as to whom this rich man refers. Olshausen considers him as put for the prince of this world. But it is fatal to this view, that it makes the whole framework of the parable spiritual; whereas all the parables of our Lord are actual occurrences in life, from which a spiritual truth is deduced. This is the more plain here, because it is fully implied that the unjust steward belonged to the *children of the world*, who are by nature children of wrath, and in a state of continued impenitence and disobedience, as opposed to the *children*

rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

*of light*, who represent believers, which could not have been true of him, if his master was the devil, whom he was defrauding of the service and wages which were unjustly claimed as due to him. If the unjust steward was unfaithful in the service of Satan, and so conducted himself that he was dismissed from his satanic service, he was certainly not one of the *children of the world*, and where then in the parable are those who in the application in v. 8, are thus styled? Would Satan also commend one of his agents, whose conduct had been so antagonistic to evil, that he was obliged to dismiss him, or give him up from his service? We cannot therefore adopt Olshausen's view, confusing and perplexing as it does the whole parable.

Equally erroneous and far more shallow is the reference by Schleiermacher to the Roman power, as though our Lord would in such a connection, or at any time, invoke the aid of the publicans in behalf of a people struggling to throw off the Roman yoke—a subject in which as a Jew he might feel a deep interest, but which formed no part whatever of his ministry, and all reference to which he most carefully avoided in all his public addresses and instructions. Lange refers the rich man to “Mammon himself, the allegorical Plutus, the spirit of gold, the genius of money, the demon of avarice.” Such also is Meyer's view. But the same objections are valid against this opinion, as were advanced against the reference of it by Olshausen to the prince or god of this world. It makes the unjust or unfaithful steward to *such* a master, eminently just and praiseworthy in the sight of God, and where then, in the parable, do we find the counterpart of the wisdom of the *children of this world*?

The great mass of expositors from the earliest times refer this feature of the parable to God, the Lord and Possessor of all things. But this makes the very costume and framework of the parable spiritual and not temporal.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of

thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within

In the *application* of the parable it undoubtedly refers to God, in reference to whom all who have entered His service are stewards. But in the parable it means just what lies upon the face of the passage—a man of this world, having large possessions, in whose service was a steward who had proved unfaithful to his trust and was therefore dismissed. It is represented, and we doubt not truly so, as a veritable transaction here on earth, and it is necessary for us to start with clear and fixed views of this truth, if we would avoid inextricable embarrassment in the exposition of the parts of the parable.

The *rich man* is then a veritable human being, introduced as one of the essential features of the story; so are the debtors, and so is the steward himself. They are not mythical personages, or personified principles and objects of human pursuit. The energy and prompt action which this steward displayed in wrong-doing, is held up as a pattern of the energy and decision which stewards of the household of God should manifest in right doing. As he drew from his stewardship the means of future support, by his prompt and energetic measures, so they are to make their stewardship to God subsidiary to their future and everlasting good. This is the central point of the parable, whence is to be drawn the spiritual lesson which it teaches. As has been remarked, however, no violence is done to the language or meaning of the parable, in regarding the rich man, as in a sense representative of God, in whose service we are engaged. But care must be taken against pressing all the particulars to a spiritual significance.

A *steward*. A general overseer and manager of the estate. Such a one was Eliezer, Abraham's steward (Gen. 15: 2). These stewards were sometimes slaves, but the one here mentioned was doubtless a freeman, or he would have been punished or sold to

another master, instead of being dismissed from service. *Was accused or ill-reported of*. The word implies a malicious accusation, but not necessarily an untrue one. The steward does not deny the charge, or attempt to prove its falsity. *Wasted* is the same word employed in 15: 13, of the squandering prodigal. The tense requires the translation *was wasting*. Dr. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. i. p. 516) says that the greatest difficulties to be met in the management of agricultural affairs, arise from the dishonesty of the agents or *wahkeels* (i. e. stewards).

2. *He called him and said*; better and more literal, *having called him he said*, the principal idea being contained in the verb. *How is it*, more literally, *what is this* (i. e. what means this) *which I hear of thee?* The words are those of angry interrogation, as to the ground and truth of the report. There is a slight emphasis on *thee*, as though he could hardly credit the report of the dishonesty of one, in whom he had placed such confidence. *Give an account*; literally, *the account*, such as all stewards were under obligations to render, when thus required to do by their employers. Dr. Jahn remarks, that the oriental kings, with the exception of the Persian monarchs, who sent legates yearly to examine into the condition of things in the provinces, did not customarily call their subordinates to account, except when, as in the present case, they were charged with maladministration of affairs. Even then, so prompt and expert were they in the arts of deception, they frequently escaped detection and punishment. *For thou mayest*, &c. This is uttered in view of the contingency of his failing to prove his innocence from the investigation of his accounts. This is implied in the *for*, which presupposes an ellipsis, *for* (if thy accounts agree not) *thou mayest*, &c. If any choose, however, to regard the dismissal from his stewardship as positive and not con-

himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do,

tingent, we may suppose his guilt to be implied in his not denying the charge and producing his accounts, or perhaps it is positively established by some confession, which is not related in form. *Thou mayest be* is literally, *thou canst not be*, the necessity of his dismissal being thereby indicated.

3. *What shall I do?* Now commences that mental calculation of the various means of future subsistence, which, on his finding no employment suited to his habits and inclinations, leads him to settle on the bold plan of falsifying in their favor the accounts of his lord's debtors, and thereby gaining such a place in their good will, that when deprived of his office, comfortable provision would be made for him in their respective homes. It is manifest from this, that the steward had not abstracted property from his lord's estate for his own use. He had wasted it, either from a negligent oversight of the trust committed to him, or by having drawn from it to defray his expensive habits of living. The latter supposition seems the more probable, from the effeminacy of his habits, indicated by his avowed inability to obtain a living by manual labor. *For my lord, &c.* This furnishes the ground of solicitude implied in the preceding question. The words *I cannot dig* are put here for physical labor in general, which, in agricultural pursuits, would consist in no small degree in upturning the earth, and preparing it for the reception of seed. The *cannot* refers to the want of bodily strength and endurance for such an employment. *To beg I am ashamed.* This was his only alternative, and it was such a descent from his former position, that he was ashamed to resort to it for a livelihood.

4. From this point onward we see with what promptness, activity, and energy, he carries out his bold and

that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said

shrewd project of making his very stewardship, which was so near its close, the means of his future support. *I am resolved what to do*; literally, *I know what I will do*, i. e. a thought has just struck me; an idea has come into my mind. The expression implies that the plan here formed, was not so much the result of deliberation, as one of those happy ideas, which suddenly and without any effort of reason, flash upon the mind, and excite wonder that they had not been thought of before. The verb *may receive*, has no expressed subject in the original. This is quite usual, when the subject, which the reader or hearer readily apprehends, for certain reasons is yet to be kept out of sight. Here he was not ready to pronounce even to himself the word *debtors*, or the pronoun *they* referring to this class of persons. All is yet left in the dark, as to the nature of his plan. *May receive me* (as a permanent inmate) *into their houses*. This is the result of his project, and in the sequel we see that, while it was fraudulent to the highest degree, yet it was a prudent course of action, which secured to him what appeared to be the greatest good. It was in their wise adaptation of means to a given end, and energy in executing their plans, rather than in the intrinsic excellence of their schemes, that worldly men, in v. 8, are declared to be wiser than the children of light.

5. *He called every one, &c.* Having hit upon a plan, he enters upon its prosecution with haste and energy, and in order to make as many friends as possible, summons into his presence every debtor of his lord. Pastor Brauns (see Bib. Repos. vol. X. Second Series, p. 456) strangely supposes, that all which is here related took place in the immediate presence of the lord, and that the steward paid the re-written accounts from his own funds, thus mak-

unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, A hundred

ing restitution to his lord, and performing a benevolent act towards these poor debtors. Thus both creditor and debtor were touched with this disposition to make amends for past misdoings, and their sympathies were enlisted in his favor. Such an absurd hypothesis is hardly worth confutation. What difference, so far as restitution was concerned, was it to the lord, whether the debtors paid each his bill in full, or the steward took upon himself the payment in part for each? Besides, if the steward was so rich as to be able to render this assistance to the debtors, how would his dismissal from office reduce him to the necessity of hard labor or to beggary? All that was necessary on such a supposition, would be for him to retain his ill-gotten treasures, and thus secure himself from want. *Unto the first.* The order is immaterial. Two examples only are given of a mode of procedure, which was adopted toward all. *How much owest thou unto my lord?* As the steward had their notes of hand or other vouchers, the question did not arise from ignorance on his part, as to the amount of their respective indebtedness. The question was designed to call distinctly to the mind of each debtor the amount of what he owed. In this way he would appreciate more fully the kind service done him. It is not necessary to suppose that these debtors had yet been made aware of the disgrace into which the steward had fallen. As he had a legal right to remit any portion of their indebtedness, while he yet remained in office, he despatches this reduction in their bills with all haste, leaving the explanation of this strange transaction for a future opportunity, when time was less valuable to him.

6. *A hundred measures of oil.* This shows that these debtors were tenants, who paid their rent in the products of their respective farms. Stier thinks that they were debtors for produce furnished and not yet paid for. The terms of the

measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

original Greek would not admit this view. The measure here intended is the *bath*, a Hebrew measure for liquids, of the same capacity with the ephah, that is,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  gallons. The amount of this man's indebtedness was therefore  $887\frac{1}{2}$  gallons of oil. *Take thy bill.* The figures only were to be altered, for, had a new bill been made out, there would have been no necessity for receiving from the hand of the steward the old one. *Quickly.* No time was to be lost. The steward goes through this fraudulent transaction with decision and energy. In this consists the very point of the parable. The lesson taught is that a like decision and energy is to be exercised in making friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, in order thereby to be received into everlasting habitations. Stier thinks that these debtors were privy to the fraud. But may they not have supposed that the steward was carrying out some benevolent intention of their lord, and not acting in this case on his own authority? Whether this were so or not, they must have been made acquainted very soon with the real facts of the case, and unless they voluntarily resumed their obligations in full, however legal may have been this transaction in the eye of human law, they became participators in the fraud perpetrated by the steward. *Write fifty.* This was an abatement of one half of the debt. If the remission of these fifty measures had reference to the yearly rent or hire of their farms, at each returning season, they would be reminded of their obligations to the steward. As only one-fifth of the hundred measures of wheat, owed by the second debtor, is remitted, those who seek an equality of remission in the case of each, find it in the assumed equality of value in 50 baths of oil and 200 ephahs of wheat, a *measure* in this case being equal to *ten ephahs* (see N. on v. 7). But it is more natural to suppose that there was a variation in the amount remitted, ac-

7 Then said he to another,  
And how much owest thou?  
And he said, A hundred measures  
of wheat. And he said un-

to him, Take thy bill and write  
fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the  
unjust steward, because he had

cording to the circumstances of the debtor. In this way also there would be nothing to excite suspicion in his lord, that such a remission of his outstanding debts had taken place.

7. *A hundred measures of wheat.* The word translated *measure* is not the one thus rendered in v. 6, but is a dry measure, equal to ten baths or ephahs. *A hundred measures* would then be 8875 gallons, or 1,111  $\frac{1}{2}$  bushels. *Write fourscore.* See N. on v. 6. These two examples serve to illustrate the plan, in reference to which the steward had said (v. 4), *I know what I will do.* The same procedure was gone through with, until, doubtless, the whole or greater portion of the debtors were thus laid under obligations to this faithless steward.

8. It appears that the lord had somehow been informed of this fraudulent business. We might conjecture various ways and reasons for this. The most probable supposition would be, that some one was seized with a qualm of conscience at the affair, when he became privy to its true nature, and thus, to relieve himself from all participation therein, divulged it to his lord. Or it might be that some one of the number did this through revenge, at having been dealt less generously with than the others. *Commended the unjust steward;* literally, *the steward of injustice*, which some erroneously render in this connection *commended the steward for his injustice*, as though the lord would praise him for acts of wrong-doing, more blameworthy even than those for which he was about to dismiss him. We are left in the dark also, as to the precise time when this took place. It may have been, and probably was, some time after the dismissal of the steward from office, when the lord had in a measure forgotten the losses he had sustained through his fraudulent steward, and could speak of his acts in a comparatively calm and reflective way.

Stier says of such a view: "It is altogether monstrous, and opposed to the current even of this world's life, which the parable is portraying, that his lord should commend the knavery which had been practised upon himself, the injustice as injustice." Such a translation is not only absurd in itself considered, but is also disproved by the following clause, which gives as the reason why he was commended, *because he had done wisely*, i. e. had made such prudent provision for his future support. The form of expression is Hebraistic, *steward of injustice* being put for *unjust steward*, as in 18:7, *unjust judge* is literally *judge of injustice*, and as *mammon of unrighteousness*, in v. 9 of this chapter, is called *the unrighteous mammon* in v. 11. The same idiom is found in the expression *body of sin* (Rom. 6:6), i. e. *sinful body*, or a body enslaved to sin; also in Rom. 7:24, *body of this death* (i. e. a frail and mortal body); and in Col. 1:22, *the body of his flesh*, i. e. his natural body. The general sense, and the verbal construction of the passage, are both met by the common translation *unjust steward*. The form *steward of injustice* is, however, one of emphasis, as though all his deeds manifested a total want of the principles of honesty and uprightness. The quality of injustice was predominant in his whole official life. Dr. Ebrard, in his Note on Olshausen's views of this passage, says that "the prudence of the steward was so great, that for its sake the very master himself praised the intrinsically iniquitous act." But not so. There is not a whit of praise bestowed upon this swindler as such. The commendation is of quite another sort. The lord of the parable admired the prompt, bold, decided act, by which the steward, in circumstances which would have paralyzed the efforts of most men, made provision for his future wants. There was prudence, or we

done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation

wiser than "the children of light.

a John 12: 36; Ep. 5: 8; 1 Th. 5: 5.

may say *cunning*, in the plan, and such promptness, energy and unflinching determination in its execution, that it extorted praise even from his master, who was so deeply wronged by the act. Language could hardly be plainer than that which asserts this. No apology is here made for his knavery, and it is amazing that the whole parable, in its simple but forcible lesson of instruction, should be mystified and clogged with such an absurd and baseless idea, as that the naked and gross injustice of the act of the steward was made a matter of praise. Our Lord styles him the *steward of injustice*, which shows the estimate which he placed upon the fraudulent act here spoken of. The simple idea, and that which challenged the admiration of his lord even, was the handsome manner, so to speak, in which he had planned and executed his villany. But we must protest against any inference from those words, that the stupendous fraud itself was looked upon with complacency by his lord. It is such unwarranted and loose inferences that have environed this parable with so many difficulties, that many good men hardly dare to approach it, lest they should find *implied*, if not *open* praise for a course of wrongdoing.

*For the children, &c.* The parable ends with the word *wisely*. Our Lord now proceeds to make the application. Here were two men of the world, one of whom had done a great wrong, and the other almost losing sight of the crime, although committed against himself, in his admiration of the shrewdness and boldness with which it had been conceived and executed. In reference to this sharp-sighted sagacity to make even the most adverse circumstances turn to his advantage, and the praise which it extorted from his master, our Lord remarks that *the children of this world* (i. e. worldly men) *are in their own generation* (by the force of the Greek preposition, *are for their life or for their day*) *wiser* (i. e. more shrewd and active) *than the chil-*

*dren of light* are for the life they live. Some translate the words in *their generation*, in respect to those with whom they live and act, people like-minded with themselves. But this ignores the force of the Greek preposition, which denotes end or purpose, like our *for*, and overlooks also the obvious scope of the parable, which is not designed to teach us how men live and act towards one another, but how sagaciously and energetically they pursue any project, which promises to advance their selfish interests. It is not then in their living wiser in reference to one another, or to the interests of society, but wiser for the accomplishment of their own end and purposes, that the *children of this world* surpass the *children of light*. This is a very important point in the parable, and should not be lost sight of in the application. The children of the two kingdoms of good and evil are here contrasted, and in view of the shrewdness and prompt action of the steward, which excited the admiration even of his wronged and outwitted lord, our Saviour declares that the worldling is wiser and more energetic in his projects *for temporal good* (for such is the meaning of *in their generation*), and receives more praise for his bold and successful villany, than is true of the children of light, who are comparatively remiss in what pertains to their eternal good, and receive so little encouragement in well-doing from those who belong to the same faith with themselves. It is as though our Lord Jesus had said: 'And no wonder that the lord commended the prudence and forethought of this unjust steward, for the men of this world are quick and shrewd to form plans of action, and resolute and unflinching to carry them into execution, and in doing this command the admiration even of those whom they have overreached and defrauded. But far inferior to them in wise, prompt, and decided action in regard to the things of God, are the children of the kingdom, although there is every thing in

9 And I say unto you, <sup>1</sup> Make to yourselves friends of the mammon Da. 4 : 27; Mat. 6 : 19; & 19 : 21; ch. 11 : 41; 1 Ti. 6 : 17, 18, 19.

the higher life to call forth their energy and forethought.

9. In the application which our Lord now proceeds to make, we are relieved of much of the difficulty, which otherwise would have invested the interpretation of this parable. *I say unto you.* 'The lord commended his dishonest steward for his forethought and cunning, in making his stewardship at the very last moment conduce to his future support. Now I urge upon you the necessity of a like forethought and diligent use of means, in making provision for the future wants of the immortal soul. So fulfil the duties of your stewardship—which, in the sight of God, is attended with such shortcomings and delinquencies, that it may well be called the *unrighteous mammon*—that by means of it you may secure friends, who will receive you after death into everlasting habitations.' Such is the general application of the parable. The idea of *almsgiving*, which some expositors find exclusively in this parable, has led them to refer *friends*, to the poor thus relieved, by virtue of whose prayers the benevolent are to be rewarded in the manner here stated. But this overlooks the true sense of the parable. The word *friends*, which really refers here to God, in whose gift alone is eternal life, is employed in the plural, to comport with the friends which the unjust steward made, when about to be turned out of office. The phrase *mammon of unrighteousness*, or *unrighteous mammon*, corresponds to the stewardship, from which the dishonest steward contrived to make provision for his future support. The stewardship in the parable had reference to the oversight of property, and *mammon* or *riches* is selected in the application of the parable, to comport with this idea. It is called the *unrighteous mammon*, because our stewardship in the sight of God is so defective; especially in all that pertains to the right use of property. Yet out of this stewardship, so unrighteous

mon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

in God's sight, we are nevertheless to make provision for eternity, just as the steward out of his unjust stewardship contrived to make friends against his time of need. *Mammon of unrighteousness*, while it indicates in its form of expression the great element of our stewardship, riches, property, possessions, is not to be referred, however, exclusively to that, but embraces all the gifts of God, which go to make up the sum total of our means of usefulness. Promptness, energy, decision, firmness, activity in the discharge of the duties involved in our stewardship, are the duties here taught, and this constitutes the whole drift of the parable. Other explanations are attended with insuperable difficulties, which can be removed by no fair principles of interpretation.

*That when ye fail, i. e. when you cease to live.* The language here also corresponds to the terms of the parable. At the hour of death we lay down our stewardship, as the unjust steward was obliged to abdicate his office. We can no more make our stewardship avail us after death, than this man could draw support from his office, after he had been deprived of it. *They, i. e. the friends just spoken of, which, as we have before remarked, are to be referred to God.* Here as in v. 4, the verb has no subject, the idea intended being simply *a receiving*, the ones who receive being purposely kept out of sight. The general sense of the passage I conceive then to be this: 'So fulfil the duties of your stewardship—which is so defective, even in the case of those who are most faithful, that it may well be called a *stewardship of unrighteousness*—that when you leave this world you may enter upon the rewards of the blessed in heaven.' *Habitations*; literally, *tabernacles, tents*. This word corresponds to the *houses* of the debtors (v. 4), into which the steward was making provision for his future reception. The pronoun *their*, which was in

10 'He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not

c Mat. 23: 21; ch. 19: 27.

the parable (v. 4), is here omitted, because *friends* in the application relating to God, it would have marred this idea, by even seeming to refer these everlasting abodes to any other owners or possessors than God himself. The word *tents*, is employed instead of *houses*, because the everlasting mansions of the blessed are typically referred to, in the tents in which the people dwelt, during their journeyings in the wilderness. Ps. 15: 1; 61: 4; Heb. 8: 2; 9: 11.

10. Our Lord now very aptly repeats a proverbial saying, in order to impress more permanently upon the mind of his disciples the weighty truth just spoken. *That which is least* refers (see v. 11) to the mammon of unrighteousness, or to the earthly stewardship committed to us, and is compared with the riches of the inheritance of the saints in glory, denominated here *in much* or *that which is much*, i. e. *the true riches* (v. 11). The difference between the two is very great. The highest gifts and endowments, which form the basis of our earthly stewardship, are small and insignificant, when compared with the treasures bestowed upon those who are "faithful unto death." Yet so close and indissoluble is the connection between character on earth, and that in the future state, that any one who abuses his earthly stewardship, small as it may relatively appear, will certainly manifest a like faithlessness in the management of his heavenly inheritance. Fidelity in the discharge of earthly duties, will insure fidelity in that which pertains to the heavenly, and so of the opposite.

11. *If therefore, &c.* This is an inference from the preceding adage, and contains its application to the point in hand. *Unrighteous mammon* interprets the *mammon of unrighteousness* in v.

been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

29, and shows beyond a doubt, that our earthly stewardship is referred to in both places, not simply in the use of property, but of every thing committed to us by God. *To your trust* as stewards. *The true riches*, i. e. the true, substantial good, as opposed to the fleeting and perishable things of time.

12. This sentiment is here still further expanded and enforced, showing our Lord's estimate of its importance. Indeed a right use of the things committed to us on earth, lies at the foundation of all our hopes for the future. *That which is another man's*. Here reference is again had, under a varied form of expression, to the *mammon of unrighteousness* in v. 9. It was denominated *that which was least*, in v. 10, and the *unrighteous mammon*, in v. 11. It is here called *that which is another man's*, because it comports with the very idea of stewardship, that one acts as an agent, or manager of another's property. A wide difference is also made in the pages of revelation, between our condition as stewards or servants, entrusted with possessions which we are to use faithfully for another, and as heirs of an heavenly inheritance, which through the grace of God we may call our own. This great truth is fully brought out in this verse. If we evince fidelity in the service of our Heavenly Father, we shall be endowed with an inheritance which is imperishable, and of which we shall never be deprived. It will be of grace (*who shall give you*), but a gift made under such conditions, that it will never be revoked, but be ours in endless possession. "All earthly substance is in itself *least* through the deceitfulness of sin which clings to it, and must ever be to the inner immortal nature of man, by reason of its adventitious value, and transitional pos-



13 'No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all

d Mat. 6: 24. e Mat. 23: 14.

session *another man's*. As opposed to this, the faintest spark of spiritual grace from the gift of God is *much*; such possessions alone are the *true*, which never deceives, and by right divine this only is essentially and eternally our own." Stier.

13. See Ns. on Matt. 6: 24. The connection of thought is this: 'Put as we are in possession of an unrighteous mammon, which we are to use with all diligence, we are to take heed, nevertheless, that our affections are not placed thereon, inasmuch as a division of affection and service between God and the world is impossible.' See Hos. 2: 2. This fitly closes up the parable of the unjust steward. Supreme love to God is demanded of all, and the duties of each one's stewardship are to be discharged with single reference to this great and all-pervading truth.

14-31. THE PHARISEES ARE REPROVED BY JESUS. PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS. *Perea*. This portion of Luke is closely connected with the preceding parables, but it seems to have such distinct and emphatic reference to the scribes and Pharisees, that it is well thrown, by Dr. Robinson, into a section by itself.

14. *The Pharisees also*. Webster and Wilkinson refer *also* to v. 1, in the sense *as well as the disciples*. But I prefer to take it in the sense which lies on the face of the passage, that the Pharisees, as well as the disciples, heard the comparatively low estimate placed upon wealth in the parable of the unjust steward, and being of a covetous disposition, and desirous of amassing wealth, they began to *deride him*; literally, *to turn up the nose* (sneeringly) at

these things: and they derided him.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which <sup>1</sup>justify yourselves before men; but <sup>2</sup>God knoweth your hearts: for <sup>3</sup>that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

f Ch. 10: 29. g Ps. 7: 9. A 1 Sa. 16: 7.

him. This drew down upon them a severe rebuke, and a parable which reveals the retributions of eternity, in more awful colors, than is elsewhere to be found in God's word.

15. The connection of this verse is somewhat obscure. A rebuke of the covetousness of these men would seem at first sight to have been more appropriate and timely, than of their hypocrisy. But covetousness in persons, who, like the Pharisees, professed the most supreme regard for the honor of God, is the most flagrant hypocrisy. Hence our Lord strikes at their leading or generic sin, which was the desire to be reputed as men of great sanctity, while at heart they were selfish, avaricious, revengeful, and corrupt. *Which justify yourselves*, i. e. profess to be strict observers of the law. Justification is to be taken here in a legal sense. The Pharisees sought the honor of this from their fellow-men, and thus "went about to establish a righteousness of their own, and had not submitted to the righteousness of God." Rom. 10: 3. *Knoweth your hearts*, and is fully cognizant of your hypocrisy. The idea of abhorrence is also implied in this perfect knowledge which God had of the Pharisaic character. The reason for this is contained in the following clause, *for that which is highly esteemed among men*, i. e. this outward show of sanctity. *Is abomination*. This word, which literally means something that stinks, aptly denotes the utter abhorrence, with which God regards that which is the chief object of human pursuit. A great principle is here laid down, that God's estimation of those things which men covet, is far different from theirs, and

16 'The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

17 'And it is easier for heaven

† Mat. 4: 17; & 11: 12, 13; ch. 7: 29. & Pa. 102: 26, 27; Is. 40: 9; & 51: 6; Mat. 5: 18; 1 Pe. 1: 25.

hence, in order to know what is pleasing to Him, we must have recourse to His holy Word.

16. *The law (i. e. the dispensation of law) and the prophets were until John.* In Matt. 11: 13, it is fully written, *prophesied until John*; and on the strength of that, we may supply *preached or prophesied* in the passage before us. On the general sentiment, see N. on Matt. 11: 12, 13. Stier takes *every man presseth into it*, in a bad sense, of the violent opposition made by the Pharisees against the kingdom of God. He argues the necessity of this interpretation from the antithetic *but*, in v. 17. 'Ye strive against the gospel of the kingdom, which is the obvious fulfilment of both law and prophecy, *but* it is easier for the heavens to pass away than for the law to fail in one tittle of its essential permanent requirements.' I cannot, however, adopt this exposition. It is a violent perversion of the plain, literal sense of the passage, which is simply, *every one strives for it*, i. e. to enter into it, to possess themselves of its privileges. There is, indeed, an implied censure of the hardness of heart and unbelief of the Pharisees, that when the common people were rushing in crowds, and with a sort of violence to obtain possession of proffered blessings of the gospel, they were stupid and indifferent to its claims, and coveting that which was abomination in the sight of God. It is in reference to this implied opposition, that the *but* in v. 17 is used, and not, as Stier thinks, from an open expression of the opposition in the language itself.

17. Our Lord here shows that it was not the design of the gospel dispensation, which was shedding its blessings on the poor and humble, to make void

and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

18 'Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put

† Mat. 5: 32; & 19: 9; Ma. 10: 11; 1 Co. 7: 10, 11.

the law of God, or abrogate any of its claims, but to establish and confirm it. Nor would the Pharisees, who so totally lost sight of and perverted the spirit of the law, be able by withstanding the gospel, in which the law had its fulfilment, to deprive the law of its true force and design. He therefore repeats, with a slight variation, the proverbial expression, which he had before uttered, on a similar occasion. See N. on Matt. 5: 18. The conjunction *and*, in this verse, should have been translated *but*, in accordance with the original, and also the evident antithesis between this and the preceding verse, which seemed to imply a breaking down or abrogation of the sanctions of the law. *It is easier for heaven, &c.* In Matthew: *until heaven and earth pass away.* Luke's statement is based on the impossibility of the removal of the material universe; Matthew's, on its permanence. *One tittle* is in Matthew *one jot or tittle.* *To fail* of its fulfilment.

18. The connection of this verse is quite obscure. Olshausen refers this assertion of the indissoluble nature of the marriage connection, to the spiritual adultery of which the Jewish nation was guilty, and especially the Pharisees, in bestowing that supreme love upon mammon, which belonged to God. But this is unnatural and far-fetched, and besides establishes no connection with the context. The argument in these verses is to vindicate the gospel from the charge of its enemies, that it abrogated the law of God. This charge was often repeated in the times of the apostles. See Rom. 3: 31. Our Lord denies that the gospel does this, and adduces an example of the higher and more spiritual authority and strictness of observance, with which the new dis-

away from *her* husband committeth adultery.

pensation invested the divine law. In the Sermon on the Mount, the declaration of the permanence of the law, was followed by several examples of its high spiritual force and obligation. See Matt. 5: 21, 27, 33, 38, 43. In like manner our Lord here adduces an example, drawn from the seventh commandment, to illustrate and enforce the declaration just made of the immutability and unchanging character of the divine law. This makes the connection of the verse natural and obvious. Stier, with his usual good judgment, adopts this same connective force: "As for example, your disorderly divorces, which I have only to mention as exhibiting your laxity of practice (as was said before, Matt. 5: 31), which the inviolable law, confirmed with new force by Me, condemns." In regard to this interpretation, which our Lord gives of the sanctity and binding force of the marriage tie, it will be seen that marriage with either of the separated parties, involves the crime of adultery. It is adultery to marry the wife who is put away by her husband, as truly as to marry him. The law of marriage is thus restored to its true meaning and binding obligation, in the light of the new and spiritual dispensation which was now being ushered in. It may be remarked, that there is one exception to the rule here laid down, given by Jesus in Matt. 5: 32 (on which see Note), and perhaps another by Paul in 1 Cor. 7: 15.

19-31. This parable of the rich man and Lazarus was addressed to the Pharisees, and was designed to teach them the utter worthlessness of riches, when expended solely for worldly ease and enjoyment. It has a very obvious and striking connection with the parable of the unjust steward, in which the great duty of a faithful stewardship to God is enjoined. The Pharisees denied this. It was counter to all their plans and purposes of self-aggrandizement. They were covetous of this world's honors and goods, and sought not the honor which comes from above, nor the pos-

19 ¶ There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple

session of the heavenly inheritance. For this our Lord rebukes them (vs. 15-18), and then brings before them the awful doom of one, upon whom no particular or aggravated crime was charged, but who was simply a rich, voluptuous, worldly-minded man, or in other words, one who had not made to himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, but was an unfaithful steward of the trust committed to him. As to the question whether this is to be regarded as a veritable history, we certainly have no proof to the contrary, nor does the belief of this involve any absurdity. As to what Olshausen, Alford, and others, who deny that this parable is based on an actual occurrence, say about the symbolical name of Lazarus (i. e. Eleazer, God-help), it would be of equal validity in disproving the real existence of Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary. There is nothing strange or unnatural in the supposition that two such persons, representing the extremes of wealth and poverty, should have lived at the same time and place, and that one should have been dependent upon the other for the scanty supply of his wants. Nor without great presumption can any one deny, that their circumstances in the other world were other than as here represented. The parable in its application is general, but unless it were founded on an actual occurrence—professing as it does, in the very use and purpose to which it is here put, to be a truthful narrative—it would be as unmeaning and ineffective, as it is of weighty and terrible import, when once regarded as a reality.

The parable has two parts, the condition of these persons while on earth, (vs. 19-21), and their reversed condition beyond the grave (vs. 22-31). It will be readily seen, that the main interest concentrates upon the second portion, in which the rich man forms the prominent figure, Lazarus being introduced apparently for the sole purpose of giving prominence to the fact that Hades was not a place, where

and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day :

20 And there was a certain

there was no mutual recognition of departed spirits, but that persons who had known one another on earth, would recognize and be recognized there. It serves also to deepen one's apprehension of the rich man's woe and despair, by the glorious contrast of the poor beggar who on earth lay at his gate, but was now in the seat of the blessed, while he was suffering the torment of fire. The second part of the parable contains also a dialogue between the rich man and Abraham, which although to us full of mystery, from our ignorance of the unseen world, is yet highly instructive, both in regard to the unchangeable state of the soul beyond the grave, and the abundant light furnished by the Old Testament Scriptures, here called "Moses and the prophets," in reference to all which pertains to human salvation.

19. *There was a certain rich man*; more literally, *A certain man was rich*, &c. The words in *purple*, refer to robes dyed with purple. This was so costly a color, that it was worn only by persons of rank and wealth. For aught we know, this may have been the celebrated and expensive Tyrian purple, and some have gone so far as to suppose from this that if not a king, the rich man must have been one of the royal family. But this is mere conjecture, and is not essential to the point of the parable, which refers to his riches rather than his rank. *Fine linen*. This refers to the fabric for the inner garment. It was probably of Egyptian manufacture, and as some think composed of cotton, but more probably of a fine yellowish flax, which was capable of being drawn out in threads of great tenuity. All this shows that the raiment of the rich man was of the finest and costliest description. *Fared sumptuously*, or *cheering his heart with feasting and merriment*. This is the same verb translated in 12 : 19, "be merry," and in 15 : 24, *let us be merry*, and in 15 : 32, *be glad*. It is employed gen-

erally of such joy and mirth as is connected with feasting. This rich man had his sumptuous entertainments, at which he and his friends drowned all care, both in regard to the present and future state, and gave full indulgence to mirth and amusement. They were not feasts indulged at long intervals of time, but rich and expensive as they were, of daily occurrence. This shows the extent of his wealth, and that he expended it freely in self-gratification. He was not a miser, hoarding up his treasures. We do not learn from the parable, that he was guilty of extortion or oppression. He is simply introduced to us as a rich man, enjoying his vast wealth, and regardless of all things else except his personal gratification. His rich clothing and sumptuously spread table, are here put as representative of every earthly good being at his disposal.

20. Contrasted with this rich man surrounded with all the luxuries of life, is a beggar, Lazarus by name, who in addition to his extreme want, was afflicted with a loathsome disease, making him one of the most pitiable objects which could be presented to the eye of compassion. *Beggar*; literally, *poor man*. The verb *was laid* (literally, *had been laid*), shows that this infirm beggar had been placed by some kind friend at the rich man's gate, in order to excite his compassion, in behalf of so wretched an object, or at least, that the beggar might receive such alms, as from his abundance he might choose to bestow. Squalid poverty was here brought into juxtaposition with proud and overflowing abundance. This put the character of the rich man to the test, and gave him a rare opportunity of making to himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. *At his gate*. The word *gate*, does not here refer to a common or ordinary door, but to one of those large and splendid gateways or deep arches, under which the gate opens to the mansion. It was not at the door of an ordinary house,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the

rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

but under the arched gateway of a large and magnificent palace, where this poor beggar in his rags and wretchedness was laid. *Full of sores*; literally, *ulcerated* or *full of ulcers*. As it regards mendicants, it may be here remarked in general, that they were evidently quite numerous in the time of Christ, a fact not strange, when the oppressive exactions of the Romans are taken into account, and the consequent insecurity of property, in times so turbulent, as those preceding the downfall of the nation and city. Dr. Jahn says that the first mention made of this class of persons is in Ps. 109 : 10. We do not read of *vagrant* beggars, those brought to our notice being such as have taken up their position by the wayside (Mark 10 : 46), at the gate of the temple (Acts 3 : 2), the entrance to the synagogues and the like.

21. *Desiring to be fed* connects grammatically with *full of sores*, which in the original is a participle, *ulcerated*. The word *desiring* does not mean, as some maintain, that his desire to be fed was ungratified, and that he died of starvation at the rich man's gate. The verb implies a continuance of state or condition, or that he was brought daily to the gate by some friend, which would not have been the case, had he received nothing from the rich man's table. The request of Dives in v. 24, is probably founded upon the fact, that Lazarus lay at his gate, and received from his table something for the supply of his daily wants. The word then must be taken in the sense which it has in 16 : 16, that Lazarus was *thankful* (or *glad*) *to be fed with* (even) *the crumbs*. Such was his destitution, and so scanty the supply of his wants, that he gladly received the very crumbs and fragments which fell from the rich man's table, while the guests were eating, or as the servants were carrying away the broken victuals between the various courses. The idea intended to be conveyed is, that the rich man extended no sympathy to this poor diseased man who lay at his gate,

and whom he must have seen, as he went forth on his daily excursions of pleasure. He had been guilty of no cruel or inhuman act towards Lazarus, but was simply indifferent to his condition. The verb translated *to be fed*, is used in the Greek classics of beasts fed upon hay or fodder, and retains in its New Testament usage, the idea of the mere supply of the animal wants of the one who thus eats, without the social pleasures which attend a meal of which friends in common partake. *Crumbs*; literally, *small bits* or *crumbs*, such as fall to the floor in the process of eating. The etymological signification refers it to such crumbs as would fall during the process of brushing off the table, at the close of the feast, or between the courses of food served up during the entertainment. The word is put in emphatic contrast with the provisions, which loaded the rich man's table, and upon which he sumptuously fed from day to day. *Moreover the dogs came*, &c. No sympathy was shown this beggar except by the brutes here mentioned. His sores were all exposed, and as the dogs came along, they licked them as they would their own, especially when in a state of suppuration. It is not right to take this incident, as Olshausen does, as expressive of canine eagerness and greediness rather than sympathy. The obvious sentiment is that he was an object of unconcern to the inmates of the mansion, and the only sympathy which appeared to be felt for him, was manifested by the dogs, who as they came forth would pause, and mitigate the stiff and inflamed sores by gently licking them. Here then we have the points of contrast between these two persons of the parable. The one was clothed in the finest and most costly apparel; the other, in such scanty garments that his sores were exposed, or in the stronger language of Alford, "his only clothing nakedness and sores." Dives in his magnificent mansion reclined on the softest and most luxurious couches; Lazarus lay all exposed upon some thin

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's

pallet, spread upon the hard pavement under the vestibule of the edifice. The food of the former was most sumptuous and abundant; that of the latter, the mere crumbs which dropped from this bountifully spread board. The one was surrounded by his boon companions, who by flattery and obsequiousness administered to his pride and vanity; the other had no companions to soothe his distress, but the dogs. What stronger contrast in the external condition of these two men could be conceived, than the one here by a few touches so vividly given?

22. Now we are to be introduced to the respective condition of these two men beyond the grave, and from this we learn that on earth, there was as great a difference in their *internal* as *external* state, and that Lazarus was rich in all that pertained to holiness and preparation for heaven, while the other was miserably poor, and in want of all things. The beggar on earth has now the precedence. In this world it was *the rich man and Lazarus*, but henceforth their condition is reversed, and it is *Lazarus and the rich man*. *It came to pass* in process of time. This shows that he did not die, as some suppose, of immediate and absolute starvation at the gate of the rich man. *Was carried by angels*, &c. This is put in contrast with the words *was buried*, which indicate the pomp and expensive display of the rich man's funeral. The body of the beggar was probably buried in some obscure place, no one caring to bestow upon it any respect. But his departed spirit was conveyed by angels to the abode of bliss. There, in accordance with the imagery which likens heavenly pleasures and enjoyments to a feast, he has the chief reclining place in Abraham's bosom, that is, next to Abraham on the triclinium or couch at the head of the table (see N. on Matt. 23: 6). The fact that no mention is made of the burial of Lazarus, is not to be taken as proof that his body was

bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And in hell he lifted up his

carried by angels to heaven. The simple idea is that the very last rites which their bodies received on earth, showed the immense difference in their earthly condition. The burial of Lazarus was so obscure as not to be worthy of being mentioned; but the rich man's funeral was attended with such a display of public grief, as to constitute an event of great notoriety. The account of the burial of Lazarus is omitted, but his glorious convoy of angels to the world of spirits is noted. The burial of the rich man is especially referred to, but the feature just referred to in the case of Lazarus is wanting. So far as the costume of the parable is concerned, the entrance of Lazarus to the future world is heralded by angels; that of the other is solitary and unannounced, at least so far as angels are concerned. Lazarus was carried by *angels*. Chrysostom remarks that *one* angel would have been strong enough for this service, but it is the joy and emulation of the angels in common to bring one sinner out of his last prison-house into the wealthy place. *Also died*, or *died too*, words expressive of the great truth, that death awaits the rich as well as the poor. The interposition of the words *was buried*, before we are introduced to his soul's condition in Hades, is no proof, as some suggest, that the sundered spirit of the sinner lingers about the tenement of clay, to be constrained, as it were, to partake of its loathsome dissolution. The words, *was buried*, seem to indicate, as has been remarked, a pompous and expensive funeral, which was the end of the rich man, so far as his earthly existence was concerned. He died, was buried, and soon forgotten. But the antithesis justifies the belief that his soul was conveyed away immediately after death to the place of torment, and if angels performed this service for Lazarus, may not the agency in the other case be referred to evil spirits?

23. *In hell*; literally, *in Hades*, the

eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on

unseen world, the place of departed spirits. See N. on Matt. 11: 23; 16: 18. As Lazarus is represented as in full sight of the rich man in torment, the expression in *Abraham's bosom*, must be referred to that part of the unseen world in which were the seats of the blessed. Bloomfield advances this as a proof of an *intermediate state* before the general resurrection, it being too prominent a feature of the parable, to be numbered with circumstances merely ornamental. But we should be cautious against any inferences of the contiguity of the righteous and the wicked, from the colloquy of Abraham and the rich man, or the sight which the latter obtained of Lazarus. We know so little of the method and medium of communication in the spirit world, that we would hardly be justified in assuming this passage to teach, that Abraham, and Lazarus, and other departed saints, have not yet entered heaven, but are in some place in the unseen world, within sight and hearing of the wicked dead, and waiting for their passport to glory in heaven, which shall be given them after the general judgment. It is sufficient to deduce from the parable, that Lazarus was in a state of ineffable bliss, and the rich man, in one of insufferable torment. This is its great central truth, and it is very unsafe to force the parable to contain, as it were, the geography or chart of the unseen world, making Hades, after the fashion of Greek mythology, to have the twofold division of an Elysium and a place of punishment and suffering. *He lifted up his eyes*; literally, *having lifted up his eyes*, i. e. having looked up. Hebrew language often employs this fullness of form before verbs of seeing. *Being in torments*. This infliction of pain is manifestly to be regarded as one of punishment. *In torments* is here

me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and "cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

m Zec. 14: 12. n Is. 66: 24; Ma. 9: 44, &c.

opposed to *Abraham's bosom*, to which place Lazarus had been conveyed by angels. The usual interpretation refers this to that portion of the unseen world, in which the wicked are exposed to punishment and pain. Had the word *gehenna*, been used, the addition of *in torments*, would have been unnecessary, as the name of the place itself would involve this idea. See N. on Matt. 5: 22. *Afar off*. See v. 26. *And Lazarus in his bosom*. According to the costume of the parable, the rich man must have obtained sight of Lazarus very soon after he entered upon his condition of suffering. It was while Lazarus was yet reclining at the banquet of bliss to which he had been conveyed by angelic agency, that he was seen and recognized by the rich man. The reversal of their previous condition is now fully apparent to him, as he gazes upon the glory and happiness of one who lay a miserable and loathsome object at his gate, thankful to receive a small pittance of his abundance. Abraham refers to this in v. 25, and it is a feature of the parable, which should be pondered upon by those who are almost disposed to impugn the justice of God in granting prosperity to the wicked in this life, while the righteous are so frequently afflicted and brought low. Compare Ps. 78.

24. *Father Abraham, &c.* Two things are deducible from this verse, one is, that there will be a recognition in the other world of those known on earth, and the other is, that the rich man was a Jew. This latter fact is brought out still more clearly in v. 29, where the rich man's brethren are declared to be in the possession of the Old Testament Scriptures. Stier says that this rich man "furnished the one solitary scriptural example of the invocation of a saint, and that a very discouraging one." *Have mercy on me.*

25 But Abraham said, Son, 'remember that thou in thy life-

time receivedst thy good things,

o Job 21: 13; ch. 6: 24.

Have compassion on me. Take pity on me. Now the rich man becomes the beggar, and, strange to say, he asks a boon at the hands of the very mendicant who had lain at his gate. *And send Lazarus.* Why did the rich man request Lazarus to be sent on this mission? Some refer it to the pride of heart, which still looked upon him as one whose highest honor it should be to serve so distinguished a personage as himself. But long ere this he had been taught by his indescribable sufferings, that his earthly riches and distinctions availed him nothing in this world of torment, and the glory and high companionship of Lazarus with Abraham, showed him to be no longer the poor, miserable, outcast person he was while on earth. The rich man could labor under no mistake or delusion of this sort. His petition is one of abject misery, addressed to those whom he knew to be far his superiors. I must therefore refer this to the fact that the rich man recognized Lazarus as one who lay at his gate, and supposed that the remembrance of this would induce him to more readily take upon himself this service, if not to be an intercessor for a still further mitigation of his torment. *That he may dip, &c.* The original is very emphatic and striking. Literally, *that he may just dip (or tinge) the tip of his finger in water.* The construction does not admit the idea of the finger being plunged into, but only moistened with the water. The rich man therefore asks not the entire removal, but only the slightest alleviation of his intense suffering. He begs for a *crumb* only of that entire exemption of pain, which Lazarus enjoys, but presumes not to ask for the smallest share of his ineffable bliss, as he reclines at the banquet of the blessed. So Lazarus on earth did not aspire to any share of the rich viands and costly delicacies which formed the daily repast of Dives. He only implored the fragments of coarse food which might fall from the table, to prevent starvation. There is

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great beauty and appropriateness in the correspondencies of the parts of this parable. *The tip*, i. e. the very extremity of the finger. *Cool my tongue, &c.* That these words denote a dreadful degree of suffering, there can be no question, but as to its precise nature revelation is here silent. Expositors and theologians have been divided as to whether this burning torment is to be referred to the rich man subjectively or objectively; that is, whether the anguish was internal, resulting from the stings of conscience, the lashings of remorse, the memories of the guilty past; or whether it was produced, in whole or part, by some external form of suffering symbolized by the application and action of material fire. As to which is the true view, we must remain in the profoundest ignorance on this side of the grave. It is well, however, to reject as far as possible all materialism in our conceptions of this awful subject. Whatever views we take in regard to the element or nature of this suffering, all must admit that it is terrible beyond any thing we can imagine, when denoted in such language as that before us. The mind shrinks back aghast from that unendurable torment, which seeks, but seeks in vain, for so slight a mitigation, as that furnished by a moistened finger to a tongue, shrivelled and parched in a burning flame.

25. The reply of Abraham is calm, dignified, and severe. He utters no reproach to his unworthy descendant, but, on the other hand, manifests for him not the least sign of pity. He was addressed by the rich man as *father Abraham*; in reply he calls him *son*. But the next word he uttered must have sounded the knell of despair in the ear of the miserable suppliant, REMEMBER. This directs him at once to the past, and takes away all hope from the present. The anguish which will be furnished by the memory of former scenes, is vividly set forth in Prov. 5: 12-14. There is perhaps no faculty, which will



and likewise Lazarus evil things : but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed : so that they which would pass from hence to you

be more conducive to suffering in the world of woe than that of memory. *In thy lifetime, &c.* These words of Abraham, as well as the glimpse of this man's previous history given us in the parable, show that he was mindful only of present enjoyment, and was regardless of the wants of his immortal soul. Of earthly goods he was in abundant possession. But when he bade those adieu, he had nothing left. Happiness forsook him for ever. Not so with Lazarus. On earth he was the poorest of the poor. He had nothing which he could call his own. But he had made wise provision for the future. He had laid up treasures in heaven. Now he had entered upon their possession. He was no longer *Lazarus the poor*, but *Lazarus the rich*, reclining at the banquet of bliss with Abraham himself, the father of the faithful and the friend of God (Isa. 41 : 8). His state was then one of fixed blessedness, while that of the rich man was its very opposite. This was not an arbitrary or chance arrangement. It resulted from the very nature of the habits, affections, and moral affinities which marked their earthly life. Stier well and strikingly remarks, "The pious Lazarus would have remained undamned in patient endurance even in these torments ; but even at Abraham's table, the rich man would have been ill at ease, so that its provisions would only have added to his raging fire." *Receivest* ; literally, *receivest in full*. He had exhausted his store of happiness, and there was nothing left him but suffering. *Evil things*. The pronoun *his*, answering to *thy*, in the preceding clause, is wanting. This is not without a meaning. The afflictions of Lazarus were not his own, in the sense in which the good things of earth belonged to the rich man. He did not covet and

cannot ; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house :

seek for them, as did the rich man the good things which fell to his lot. They were afflictions sent upon him by his merciful Father, to fit him for the high station in the realms of the blessed, to which he was to be exalted. They were not therefore *his* evil things, as though they resulted from his own agency. It is hardly necessary to say, that by *evil things*, is here meant, the ills of poverty, disease, pain, which were the lot of Lazarus in this life.

28. *Besides all this* ; literally, *in addition to all these things*. A second reason is here given why the request of the rich man could not be granted. Not only was he now receiving the just award of his sensuality and irreligious life, but a great and impassable gulf lay between them, which forbade all intercourse between those who were on different sides of it. *Great gulf*. A vast chasm. "A yawning, profound, bridgeless interval of separation." Stier. *Is fixed*, i. e. is set fast, *made firm*, which is the literal signification of the word. "*Is fixed* implies a reference to the fixed and unchangeable nature of this appointment." Olshausen. The language is borrowed from the objects of sense, but expresses, beyond a doubt, the great truth of the unalterable condition of those who enter upon the rewards and retributions of eternity. *From hence to you* from motives of compassion. *That would come from thence* in order to escape from torment.

27. The rich man, perceiving his own case to be desperate, now turns his thoughts to the friends whom he had left on earth. Those who believe in repentance and salvation in the intermediate state, such as that upon which the rich man had now entered, find in his anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his brethren "a loving remembrance of

28 For I have five brethren ;  
that he may testify unto them,

lest they also come into this place  
of torment.

them, as well as faith in the compassionate love of God ; both of which show that in his soul there still remained germs, which rendered him capable of entering into the kingdom of love." (Olshausen.) We will not here pause to controvert Olshausen's view of salvation in the intermediate state, if there be such a state, but we cannot believe, unless he had been warped from his usual good judgment by this favorite theory of his, that he would ever have seen in this request of the rich man, signs of his being "capable of entering into the kingdom of love." It seems to me to be placed beyond question, that this was a request of the same general tenor with the preceding one, (v. 24), and that it was founded on a selfish desire that his brethren, who had probably been countenanced, if not led on in wickedness, by his example, should not add to his misery, by coming to the place of torment. There can be no doubt that the presence in the world of woe of those who have been led astray by the corrupting influence of a wicked man, will add greatly to his suffering. Indeed we see in the mutual recriminations of the vicious and abandoned here on earth—in those more sane moments, when they realize the depths of degradation and sin into which they have fallen, and become avenging accusers of one another as the authors and abettors of their ruin—what cannot but constitute a most bitter ingredient in the cup of woe, of which they must forever drink in the world of despair. The rich man then did not wish his brethren warned because the love of God was beginning to warm up in his bosom, nor from the instincts of natural affection—for these are lost in the higher affinities for good or for evil, which bind the souls of men together in the future state—but from his selfish wish not to be tormented with their presence, with perhaps a covert complaint against the justice of God, in not giving him some special revelation of this place of torment. *Wouldst send*

*him.* Lazarus is again the one whom he would wish to have act as a messenger in his behalf. Was there something in the remembrance of his patient and uncomplaining spirit under privation and disease, which was overlooked at the time, but which now pointed him out as a suitable person to convey this terrible warning to his impenitent brethren? *My father's house.* This does not imply that his father was still living, but denotes the paternal mansion or estate, on or in the vicinity of which his surviving brothers lived.

28. *For I have five brethren.* As he makes no mention of his wife or children, the inference is drawn by some that he was unmarried, and that he died in early life, being prematurely broken down by debauchery. But if his wife was like the wife of Bunyan's *Badman*, there would be no necessity of warning her against the doom of the wicked. All such questions however are useless, as we know nothing of this rich man or his family connections, except as we learn it from the parable. *Testify unto them* of the fearful doom which awaits them, unless they repent. It is worthy of note, that our Lord unveils the reality of the world of woe, and himself gives the very information which the rich man sought to have conveyed to his surviving brothers. At the same time, as Alford remarks, this passage furnishes a weighty testimony from our Lord himself of the sufficiency of the Old Testament Scriptures for the salvation of the Jews, if they applied themselves to its study with a proper teachable spirit. The verb *may testify*, is very emphatic, its literal signification being, *to give earnest and continued testimony.* *Lest they also come ;* literally, *that they may not come.* A strong argument may be adduced from this passage, against the views of those who maintain that the *demons* of the New Testament were only the spirits of the wicked dead. If any one could have been pressed into the service of Satan, to afflict men after the manner of the

29 Abraham saith unto him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

80 And he said, Nay, Father Abraham: but if one went unto

p *Is.* 8: 20; & 24: 16; *John* 5: 39, 45; *Ac.* 15: 21; & 17: 11. q *John* 13: 10, 11.

New Testament demons, the antecedents of the rich man were such, that we should have supposed that he would have been selected for this demoniacal service. But directly in face of such a supposition, he is represented as being filled, for some reason, with the greatest anxiety lest his brethren should come to a like state of suffering with himself, showing that he had not yet reached the malevolence of the demons brought to our notice in the New Testament.

29. Abraham now in reply shows him how unnecessary would be this mission of Lazarus to his brethren, inasmuch as they had in Moses and the prophets, a sufficient warning of the doom which awaits the transgressor of God's law. The expression *Moses and the prophets*, refers to the Old Testament Scriptures, *Moses* being put for the Pentateuch, and *the prophets*, for the remainder of the Old Testament, especially the prophetic and devotional portions. See N. on Matt. 5: 18. *Let them hear them*, i. e. follow the directions there given to secure the favor of God. The verb *hear*, is often employed in the Scriptures in the sense of *obey*. It is worthy of notice, that while an impassable gulf separates the good and the bad in the future world, yet no such chasm is represented, as interposed between the dead and those living upon the earth. Abraham does not object, as before, the utter impossibility of Lazarus' return to earth, as a reason why the request of the rich man cannot be granted, but simply the uselessness of his mission. There existed no such reason for an impassable gulf between the dead and the living, as between the good and the wicked in the world of spirits. The inevitable law of physical life and death would prevent the spirits of the dead

them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, 'neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

from resuming their earthly condition. But a change from one condition to another beyond the grave might seem an easy affair. God has therefore separated the wicked from the good by a chasm, so wide and of such awful depth as to forbid its being crossed.

80. *Nay* implies an ellipsis. *Nay* (they will not hear them) *but if one, &c.* Alford supplies the ellipsis somewhat differently. *Nay* (leave it not so, i. e. to such uncertainty) *but if one went unto them from the dead*, it might be once and forever done. The rich man thought that there would be something so strange and awful in such a return from the spirit-world, that his brethren would surely listen to the message. But aside from the infallible certainty of inspired scripture truth, and the comparative unreliableness of that communicated by one even from the eternal world, the fact here declared by Abraham, was fully verified in the continued unbelief of the Jews, after the resurrection of our Lord himself, who had given in this parable so plain and vivid a representation of the future condition of those who die in impenitence.

31. *If they hear not Moses, &c.* If they did not yield to the overwhelming evidence which was furnished them on this point in the word of God which they possessed in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, *they would not be persuaded* (i. e. would not believe the message) *though one rose from the dead*. This, as has before been hinted at, was fully corroborated by the continued unbelief of the Pharisees, after the resurrection of our Lord from the dead. The very person who pronounced this awful parable was declared, on the most authentic evidence, to have risen from the grave; and yet, while this great fact of the gospel was fully proclaimed and

## CHAPTER XVII.

**THEN** said he unto the disciples, 'It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea,

a Mat. 18: 6, 7; Ma. 9: 42; 1 Co. 11: 19.

attested to by living eye-witnesses, the nation, as such, remained in unbelief both in the mission and doctrines of Jesus. This may be regarded as a fixed and universal truth the world over. If men reject the revelation of God made to them so clearly and explicitly in the Holy Scriptures, no vision from the realms of the dead, no strange appearance or supernatural disclosure would have the least power to remove the unbelief, which has so stoutly resisted the truth as contained in the word of God. The more palpable the vision to the natural senses, and the more awful and terrific the disclosure, the less likely would it be to have a good result, since the mind would be so paralyzed with terror as to be incapable of forming any sober and well-founded plan of action, or exercising repentance for sin, and faith in Christ. Had we not the testimony of the parable to this great fact, we might therefore argue its reality from the very principles of our nature, which, if the truth of God is rejected in one form clearly presented to the mind, makes it certain that no other mode of presentation would be any more effective. If the Bible fail to impress the mind with the realities of eternity, no other revelation of truth could do this, even though it were sounded in the ear by the trump of an archangel.

## CHAPTER XVII.

1-10. JESUS INDUCTATES FORBEARANCE, FAITH, AND HUMILITY. *Perea.* This discourse, which is closely connected with the preceding context, may have been occasioned by the abrupt

than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3 Take heed to yourselves: 'If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and

b Mat. 18: 15, 21. c La. 19: 17; Pr. 17: 10; Ja. 5: 19.

and angry departure of the Pharisees, against whose pride and hypocrisy the preceding parables had been spoken, and who must have been greatly offended, especially by the closing portion of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, which so severely rebuked their unbelief, while having in their possession the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Their busy and active hostility may have led them to influence others to forsake the company of Jesus, and to such they proved stumbling-blocks in the way of salvation.

1, 2. *It is impossible, &c.* The sentiment is, that the wickedness of men is such, that it cannot well be otherwise than that offences (literally, *stumbling-blocks*) should come. The impossibility here spoken of is a moral one, that is, one which has its necessity in the perverseness of the heart. *But woe unto him, &c.* Their frequent and inevitable occurrence, resulting as it does from a depraved heart, renders these offences more heinous and deserving of God's displeasure. See N. on Matt. 18: 7. *It were better for him, &c.* See N. on Matt. 18: 6. *One of these little ones, i. e.* those who are possessed of a childlike, humble spirit, such as he required in his disciples.

3, 4. These verses contain a general warning against giving or receiving offences. See Ns. on Matt. 18: 15, 21, 22. The connection will readily appear, when it is remembered, how such stumbling-blocks, as have been referred to in vs. 1, 2, would be likely to excite feelings of anger in those before whom they were placed. The word *offence*, from the special sense in which it was

27 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee brought him to dine with him; and he went in, and sat down to meat.

28 And when the Pharisee

6 Ma. 7: 2.

Elimination of reason and natural conscience, is referred to in the first clause by *while body*, the imagery being conformed to the natural eye, with which the comparison started in v. 24. In the second clause, the word *body* is omitted, indicating a transition to the spiritual man, enlightened by the rays of truth, which without any obstruction shine in and through his whole moral being. The verse embodies a most significant and important truth, to which we should give heed, not only in keeping our own spiritual vision unobstructed and clear, but in our efforts to bring others to the truth; and especially in training the young and guarding them against those errors and habits, which tend to darken and disease the understanding and stupefy the conscience.

27-28. JESUS DENOUNCES WORK AGAINST THE PHARISEES. *Galilee*. The coincidence between this discourse and the one related by Matthew (chap. 23), is to be referred to what I have several times had occasion to notice, in these comments on Luke, that our Lord often repeated weighty and important truths, in order to give them emphasis and effect, or to illustrate and enforce thereby other important truths. On this occasion, as he sat at the Pharisee's table, and noticed his superstitious observance of outward ablutions, he uttered some of those terrible woes, which afterwards, on his final departure from the temple, he expanded to greater length.

27. *As he spake*; literally, *when he had spoken*. The verb, translated in our common version, *to dine*, signifies a morning repast or lunch. It probably refers here to a repast taken at noontide. *He went in*; literally, *having entered*, i. e. immediately on entering. The form of expression conforms to the fact, that he occupied no time in

seeing it, he marvelled that he not first washed before dinner.

29 'And the Lord said to him, Now do ye Pharisees first clean the outside of the cup...

6 Mat. 23: 25.

ablutions, between his entering the house and reclining at the table. *Sat down*. See S. on Matt. 9: 10.

28. *When the Pharisee saw it*. The pronoun *it*, looks forward for its explanation to the next clause. The natural order would have been: 'When the Pharisee saw that he had not first washed before dinner, he marvelled.' The arrangement, as it stands in the text, seems to have been adopted to give emphasis to the verb *marvelled*. As it regards the thing here complained of, while the mode of eating with the fingers, rendered the washing of the hands before meals common and oftentimes necessary, yet the practice was sometimes dispensed with. Some very absurdly take the word *washed* (literally, *baptized*), in the sense of an ablution of the whole body. But a reference to the original in Mark 7: 2-4, will show that the words commonly translated *to wash* and *to baptize*, are there used interchangeably in the sense of the former.

29. *And the Lord said, &c.* The Pharisee had probably given utterance to his amazement, at our Lord's omission of what he esteemed of such importance. This is not necessarily to be supposed, however, for Jesus knew well what was passing through his mind, and needed not its audible expression. *Now* does not here relate to time, but is a connective imparting vivacity and emphasis to the words, which it serves to introduce. Alford gives it this turn: *here is an instance where ye Pharisees, &c.* This gives too much importance to the connective, although the sense is good. *Ye Pharisees*. Reference is had to the class of Pharisees, to which his host belonged; or perhaps other Pharisees sat at the table, and united in expressions of surprise, at the omission of the ceremony



seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

used in v. 1, gradually assumes the more general sense of injury done to one's feelings. This is evident from v. 4, where personal offences or aggressions are the subject of the discourse. The words, *take heed to yourselves*, are referred by most expositors solely to the preceding verses, as a warning against giving offence, or proving a stumbling-block to any. But with equal pertinency, the warning may be directed against the unforgiving spirit which follows.

5, 6. The apostles seem to have been aware of the difficulty of such a control of their temper, and the acquisition of such a spirit of forgiveness, as the one just inculcated, and hence utter a very appropriate petition for an increase of *faith*. The connection between an enlarged measure of faith and christian forgiveness, might not at first sight seem very obvious. But the duty of forgiveness of repeated and aggravated injury, was one so difficult of performance, that the apostles felt the need of a living, active, overcoming faith, in order that the heavenly might have such a predominance over the earthly, that these offences would appear of trivial aggravation, when viewed in relation to the great realities of eternity and the judgment to come. Faith begets love to God and our fellow-men, and love not only worketh no ill (Rom. 13: 10) to any one, but is not easily provoked (1 Cor. 13: 5), and is ready to overlook and forgive all offences. It is worthy of note, that this is the only instance recorded in the gospels, where the *apostles* as such, are represented as making any request of our Lord. In all other instances, the word *disciples* is employed. *If ye had faith, &c.* See Ns. on Matt. 17: 20; 21: 22. *As a grain of mustard-seed* is an adagial expression, denoting the least particle. *This sycamine tree.* One was doubtless

6 'And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and it should be so. & Mat. 17: 20; & 21: 21; Ma. 9: 23; & 11: 23.

standing near, which furnished the illustration. How apt and impressive this was will be seen from the following extract from Dr. Thomson's *Land and Book*, vol. i. p. 24. After stating that it is generally planted by the wayside, and in open spaces where several paths meet, and that it bears each year several crops of very insipid figs, which are eaten by the poorer classes, he remarks: "Now look at this tree—its ample girth, its wide spread arms branching off from the parent trunk only a few feet from the ground; then examine its enormous roots, as thick, as numerous, and as wide-spread into the deep soil below as the branches extend into the air above—the very best type of invincible steadfastness. What power on earth can pluck up such a tree? Heaven's thunder-bolt may strike it down, the wild tornado may tear it to fragments, but nothing short of miraculous power can fairly pluck it up by the roots." Dr. Thomson maintains that this tree is identical with the sycamore-tree (Luke 19: 4), and from so competent a judge, I should hardly feel inclined to differ. Some contend that this is the mulberry tree, but Dr. Thomson says this tree is more easily plucked up by the roots than any other tree, of the same size, in the country, and it could hardly be supposed that our Lord would select this tree with its short, feeble roots, to illustrate the irresistible power of faith.

7-10. That these verses are intimately connected with the preceding context, is evident from the word *but*, and equally true is it from the same connection, that our Lord means to caution them against some wrong impression, which they might receive from this power of faith to which he had just referred. Webster and Wilkinson find the connection to be this, "Even if you have this faith, you are not to

the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

7 But which of you, having a servant ploughing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

think that you have done a great thing; or if you are enabled thereby to perform miracles in my name, you must not suppose yourselves on that account entitled to a reward. Faith and its effects are to be your required service. And who is there of you having," &c. Stier thinks that idea of the higher confidence in the *humble* power of love is the one designated: "Loving from the love of God is more than the laying hold of His Almightyness; it is faith which overcometh, *but* in the humility of enduring love, not as an imperative master, but as a ministering servant." Olshausen finds the connection in the mournful sense of the difficulty of the struggle which awaited them, indicated by their prayer for faith, and the longing after speedy rest and reward, which formed the prevailing sentiment in the minds of the apostles. These views do not differ materially, and bring out the true connection. But may we not give it clearer expression in some such train of thought as this? 'You have prayed for an increase of faith. This is right, for its power, even in small possession, is irresistible. *But* you stand pre-eminently in need of the spirit of patient endurance. My service on earth requires labor, toil, and suffering. Before you, however, in the world to come, is rest and enjoyment. Remember therefore that as the servant cannot expect to sup before his lord, and by awaiting his proper time, does nothing beyond what might be expected from one in his station, so ye are not to regard as praiseworthy a patient continuance in well doing, but to feel when you have done all that you are unprofitable servants.' This gives a plain, simple, connected train of thought, and does not

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

6 Ch. 12: 87.

overlook the force of the *but*, with which these verses commence.

7. *Which of you.* The words are addressed to the apostles as men generally, not implying that they were personally in the condition here assumed. Which of you men? *A servant.* The original word and the connection forbid this to be taken of a hired servant, but of one purchased or born to servitude, whose only remuneration for labor consisted in his food and clothing. The words *ploughing or feeding cattle*, are generically expressive of all kinds of labor, from that which is most severe, like the labors of the ploughman, to the more easy task of watching and feeding cattle. All are alike to do their lord's bidding, wait upon him until he is first served, and then at the proper time attend to their own wants. Those who have toiled hardest, and borne the heat of burden of the day, have no more claim to be exempted from a patient and ready obedience and service to the end, than those whose toils and labors have been comparatively light. This is a feature in the illustration which should not be overlooked. The words *by and by* should be rendered *immediately, forthwith*, and taken with the words *go and sit down to meat*, as the adverb plainly corresponds with *afterward* in v. 8. *Sit down*; literally, *lie down, recline*, according to the usual posture at the table in those times. The words *to meat* are implied, but not expressed in the original.

8. *And will not rather.* In the original: *but will not*; by the force of the interrogative, which implies an affirmative answer, *indeed will he not rather*, &c. The additional service to the labors of the field, contained in the com-



9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

10 So likewise ye, when ye

shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are / unprofitable servants :

Job 22 : 3 ; & 35 : 7 ; Ps. 16 : 2 ; Mat. 23 : 80 ; Ro. 3 : 12 ; & 11 : 35 ; 1 Co. 9 : 16, 17 ; Philem. 11.

mand, *make ready*, &c., is what illustrates the patient, untiring obedience to end of life, which we owe to God. The field labor was ordinary service. The preparation for the evening feast demanded of them, when they returned weary with toil, tested the principles of their zeal and fidelity to their master. "When the day's work is done, rest does not immediately follow, but there is a new girding and serving unto the end."—Stier. *Make ready*, refers to the general preparation for the evening's repast, and *gird thyself*, to the particular service of waiting upon his master at the table.—See John 13 : 4. The long and flowing robes of the Orientals were gathered up and confined to the girdle, when they were engaged in business which required the unimpeded and active use of their limbs. *Till I have eaten and drunken*. Compare this with 12 : 37, where the gracious condescension of the master is the theme of the discourse, but here the duty which his servants owe to him. *Afterwards*, &c. The servant shall not fail in the full supply of his necessary wants. The implication is that he shall eat his fill from the same food of which his master partook. We are to take this parable or illustration in the sense which lies on its face, of the obligations strictly implied in the relation of a servant to a master. These obligations of servitude are infinitely enhanced, when we refer them to our relation to God, whose we are, and "in whom we live and move and have our being." But it is an unwarrantable inference from the illustration, that our Lord sanctions the overworking of those in our employment, or a disregard for their comfort in the rigid exactions from them at all times, of the full toll of service which we can lawfully require. A kind considerate reference to the welfare and happiness of those who are engaged in our ser-

vice, is enjoined upon us, not only by the dictates and laws of common humanity, but by the spirit and letter of God's word.

9. Doth he thank that servant, as though he had done him some extraordinary favor, not required by the terms of his service? *I trow not*. Obsolete English for *I think not*, which is in the original a very strong negative, *by no means, not at all*.

10. *Unprofitable* in the sense of having done any thing beyond the requirement of duty, as appears from the next clause, in which the sentiment is expanded and explained. *We have done that* (and no more) *which was our duty* (literally, *which we owed or was under obligation*) *to do*. The language is borrowed from that employed in the payment of a debt, without any profit to the lender or the creditor. This throws light upon the preceding word *unprofitable*, which literally signifies, *without use, useless*. As the loan of money without interest, is a useless transaction to the lender, even though it be promptly returned by the borrower, so our *whole* service is due to God, and in reference to any thing over and above, even when we have done all, we are *useless and unprofitable*. We have given to God only that which is his own, and no works of supererogation can be performed, which will entitle us to the credit of having done more than the strict claims of duty. Cf. Job 22 : 2, 3 ; Rom. 11 : 35 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 7

11-19. THE CLEANSING OF THE TEN LEPROUS. *Samaria*. There can hardly exist a doubt, that Luke has narrated this incident out of its proper position, as it seems to have taken place on our Lord's journey to Jerusalem, to attend the feast of tabernacles (see John 7 : 1, 10, compared with Luke 9 : 51-56). Stier thinks, however, that it occurred during his last journey to Jerusalem,

we have done that which was our duty to do.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, 'as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a

but confesses his inability to solve the chronological difficulties which invest it. Olshausen and Alford refer it to his journey to the feast of tabernacles. But then a question arises by what law of association, if that of time is to be rejected, Luke weaves into this closely connected narrative, an incident which happened at another and subsequent journey. It cannot be attributed to inadvertence, or a careless arrangement of facts and events. Aside from the divine inspiration under which he composed his gospel, he was too accurate a writer to throw together in careless arrangement the materials of his gospel. There must be some bond of connection, which attaches this incident to the narration here carried forward. That connection I conceive to be this. Our Lord had just been conversing about our being under obligation of service to God, but having no claim of service upon Him. We are so *unprofitable*, that we can demand nothing whatever on the ground of merit. For every blessing therefore which we thus gratuitously receive at his hand, we owe him the expression of the deepest gratitude and love. This general thought brought to Luke's mind a signal instance of ingratitude which occurred in a previous journey to Jerusalem, in the case of a company of lepers whom our Lord had cleansed. Out of *ten* who were cured of this dreadful, loathsome disease, only *one* returned to thank Jesus, and he was a Samaritan from whom it would have been least expected. This makes the connection simple and obvious, and relieves us from the necessity of adopting the almost incredible view, that our Lord on this last journey from Perea to Jerusalem, passed through the countries here mentioned. We have seen in a number of instances, that Luke de-

certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, 'which stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

g Lu. 9: 51, 52; John 4: 4. A La. 13: 46

parts from a chronological order of narration, and this is most unquestionably an instance of such a departure.

11. *It came to pass*, i. e. it so happened. These words refer to his passage through the countries here spoken of. *He passed through*, i. e. between the confines or borders of these countries. The pronoun in the original is emphatic, and implies that while his brethren (see John 7: 2-10) went up to Jerusalem openly and by the usual road, *he* took a more unfrequented route, which led along the confines of Samaria and Galilee. Alford remarks that the journey, as mentioned by Matthew (19: 1), would lead him by this route.

12. *As he entered into a certain village*. A better and more literal translation would be: *as he was drawing near to a certain village*. Lepers were not permitted to approach near the gates, and hence this occurrence must have taken place while he was yet some distance from the village. *Ten men that were lepers*. Their exclusion from society would naturally draw them together, and to such a degree did their common misery and loneliness break down all distinctions, that a Samaritan even was admitted to their company. *Which stood afar off* from the highway, in order not to pollute any one by contact with him. The law for this separation is found in Lev. 13: 45, 46; Numb. 5: 2, and an illustration of it in 2 Kings 15: 5.

13. *They lifted up their voices*, so that Jesus might hear their cry for help, since their disease forbid their near approach to him. They had doubtless heard of his wondrous power and compassion, and now with earnest cries they implore his interposition in their behalf. *Master*. By the use of this word they intimate their readiness to

14 And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, 'Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned  
 4 Le. 18 : 2; & 14 : 2; Mat. 8 : 4; ch. 5 : 14.

acknowledge him as their teacher, and virtually profess themselves already his disciples. *Have merry.* In this general appeal to his sympathy, is of course embraced the request to be cured of their dreadful malady.

14. *When he saw, &c.* The sight of these wretched men aroused his compassion, and he immediately addressed them in terms of encouragement. The act of healing however was not wrought upon them, until they had turned to go away at the command of Jesus. There was no touching them, with the words, "I will, be thou clean," as in Matt. 8 : 3. It was simply, *Go show yourselves to the priest*, and their ready obedience to this command, even before the healing virtue of Jesus had been experienced by them, as well as their previous application for relief, showed that they all had faith, although not accompanied with the full measure of love and gratitude, which was manifested by the Samaritan, after he had been healed. *The priests.* The plural is appropriately used, there being ten who were to present themselves for priestly inspection. But to what priest was the Samaritan directed? The Jewish priests would not have admitted him into their presence, or even have held conversation with him. Was he then directed to repair to his own Samaritan priest? This would have been a recognition, on the part of Jesus, of the validity of that priesthood. Stier finds himself unable to decide between these two views. But may we not avoid this dilemma, by referring it to the Jewish priesthood, and supposing the direction, so repugnant to the views and feelings of a Samaritan, to have been given him rather as a test of his obedience, than as a duty

back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

16 And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?

which in the issue would be required of him to discharge. His overflowing love brought him back to the feet of Jesus; and He who was the reality and embodiment of the priestly office of the old dispensation, absolved him from the presentation of himself to the Jewish priests, and bid him go his way in peace and religious freedom. *As they went, &c.* We are not told how far they had proceeded on their way, before they were cleansed. It was doubtless a sufficient distance to test the power and endurance of their faith, and yet not so far, as to preclude the return of this man to Jesus. *Turned back.* The original tense denotes prompt and decided action. *With a loud voice.* He had raised his voice for help, and now he is not ashamed or backward in shouting aloud his praises to God for the great mercy he had experienced. If the reader will recur to the Note on 4 : 27, he will see what occasion this man had for his overflowing joy. But he not only gave open and loud expression of his praises to God, *he fell down on his face at Jesus' feet*, and testified his gratitude and love by thanking him for his great mercy. The words *and he was a Samaritan*, are as though it had been said, 'and this was the more strange, for he was a Samaritan, and might not be expected to have evinced such gratitude to a Jew.' There is therefore in this clause an implied allusion to the hatred and non-intercourse between the Jews and Samaritans. See N. on John 4 : 9.

17. *Answering* to this manifestation of love and thankfulness, on the part of the Samaritan. This form of expression is employed, even when no question has been asked, to show that the

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19 <sup>a</sup> And he said unto him,

℣ Mat. 9 : 22; Ma. 5 : 84; & 10 : 52; ch. 7 : 50; & 8 : 48; & 18 : 42.

words spoken have a close relation to some act or event, which has just been related. *Were there not ten cleansed?* His love and solicitude went forth to the nine, who rejoicing in their cure were now on their way to the priests, thinking probably more of the blessing of sound health, than of their great Deliverer. But he did not forget them, and there is hardly to be found a more tender and even plaintive inquiry than the one here made, *Where are the nine?*

18, 19. *There are not found, &c.* The Syriac version has it: *Were none found to return and give glory except this stranger?* The expression, *to give glory to God*, indicates also the thanks to Jesus rendered by the Samaritan. *Stranger*; literally, *alien, one of a different stock*. *Arise*. He still lay prostrate at Jesus' feet. *Thy faith hath made thee whole*. This refers to the higher blessing of moral purification from sin, and acceptance with God. There are some expositors, however, who refer this to the promise of a confirmed cure, and suppose that the nine, who did not return to acknowledge their obligations to Jesus, were smitten anew with the disease. But there is no ground for such an inference. The narrative does not imply the entire absence of love and gratitude on the part of the *nine*, but only its existence in a far less degree than in the Samaritan. That there must have been no small degree of faith in them, appears evident from the ready obedience with which they turned and went away from Jesus at his direction, even while the loathsome disease was yet fully upon them, and no external sign or word had indicated his intention of removing it. If any one will reflect upon this, he will see how great and operative must have been their faith in leaving the presence of Jesus before they were healed, and

*Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.*

20 ¶ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The

no one should therefore interpret too unfavorably their comparative want of love and gratitude, in holding on their way to the priests, instead of returning to Jesus. It may be that they promised themselves an immediate return to him, after they had been pronounced clean by the priests; or that they regarded his command (v. 14), as one to be scrupulously obeyed in order to the validity of their cure. Whatever was the reason, while we would not presume to charge them with entire absence of love, after so extraordinary an exhibition of faith, yet that they were culpably remiss in its proper expression, even if it had not been wholly displaced for the time being by their joy at their personal recovery, is evident from that touching inquiry, *but where are the nine?* I cannot but think, therefore, that the words, *thy faith hath made thee whole*, are to be referred to salvation from sin, that moral leprosy, which cleaves to all who are not cleansed in the blood of Christ.

20-37. THE PROPHETIC ANNUNCIATION OF CHRIST'S COMING. *Perea*. The thread of discourse is here resumed from v. 10, although some expositors make the village, which he was about to enter (v. 12), the place where this question was put by the Pharisees. As it regards the inquiry, we must not consider it sincere, but ironical, insulting, and ensnaring. 'When is this kingdom of which you speak so frequently, and represent yourself as the founder, to come? When shall we see its beginning? We are tired with waiting for its approach. Tell us plainly when it is to be set up. Let there be no subterfuge or evasion.' Such is the purport of this inquiry, apparently so ingenuous and honest, but in reality so taunting and insulting. But the question was one of such importance, that overlook-

kingdom of God cometh not with observation :

21 'Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold,

i V. 23.

ing the motives that prompted it, and the abrupt and offensive terms in which it was made, Jesus replied to it in words of great dignity and profound signification. In order to understand fully this reply, we must bear in mind that the Pharisees regarded the benefits of the Messiah's kingdom as exclusively theirs. Hence they manifested no solicitude, as to their worthiness to be partakers of its blessings, but were anxious only for its approach, and curious to know the time of its establishment. Our Lord, by divesting the Messianic kingdom of all external pomp and heraldry of approach, corrects their erroneous views, and teaches them that it was a spiritual kingdom, having its seat in the hearts of all who are its true subjects and entitled to its blessings. *Cometh not with observation*, i. e. so that its approach will be cognizable to the external senses. There will be no great sign from heaven (see Ns. on 11: 16; Matt. 12: 38; 16: 1), no political excitement among the nations, no triumphal march of conquering armies, no pomp and display whatever, in short, no external manifestation, which the most careful and observant eye can discern as a proof of its advent and existence. Its approach is to be marked by other signs, but yet not less sure and determinate.

21. *Shall they* (i. e. men) *say* in regard to its coming and development. The pronoun *they*, refers to those who by their spiritual discernment are cognizant of the internal approach and presence of this kingdom. Such persons will not be trumpeting forth the event with a *lo here!* or *lo there!* (see N. on Matt. 24: 23,) for it will be internal, spiritual, and not at all discernible by the external senses. This clause is negative, in regard to its connection with what precedes, but is in reality a positive assertion that the event is seen

"the kingdom of God is within you.

22 And he said unto the disciples, "The days will come, when

see Ro. 14: 17.    \* See Mat. 9: 15; John 17: 12.

and determined. *For behold, &c.* This is the reason why there will be no external signs of its approach, and no rumors and reports of its establishment in this or that place. *The kingdom of God is within you.* As this was addressed to the Pharisees, in whose hearts this spiritual kingdom had no abiding place, I prefer with Alford to adopt this as the sense, *the kingdom of God is (already) among you.* It has come upon you silent and unobserved. While you were looking on earth and in the heavens for signs of its approach, it came, and thousands are already rejoicing in its blessings. Stier has some admirable remarks upon this verse. After eloquently describing the gradual unfolding of this kingdom, from its first revelation in the babe of Bethlehem to the time of Christ's coming in all the glory of God and his holy angels, he concludes, "the kingdom of God, we say it once more, for now there is need, can absolutely not be any constitution or organization of external continuance, in the fashion of earthly kingdoms and states; it cannot be any ecclesiastical state, or state-church, or Christian empire—generally speaking it can be no church as such, although all these in their shifting forms may serve as instruments and materials for its consummation."

22. The question of the Pharisees was captious and ensnaring. Jesus therefore replied to it in the briefest manner, although in terms of calm dignity and conscious knowledge of that of which he spake. He now turns to his disciples, and in language intentionally obscure, declares that he would soon be taken from their sight, and they would then long, but in vain, for one of the days of his earthly presence. The fundamental idea is that the Pharisees, as their question evinced, did not acknowledge the claims of Jesus to the Mes-

ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

23 'And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after *them*, nor follow *them*.

24 'For as the lightning, that

*o* Mat. 24 : 23; Ma. 13 : 21; ch. 21 : 8.  
*p* Mat. 24 : 27.

siaship. But yet despite their unbelief and rejection of his claims, he was this promised Personage, and the kingdom of God was therefore already among them. His thoughts naturally ran forward from this declaration of his personal advent as Messiah, to his removal from the earth; and turning to his disciples, he intimated this fact, by stating the effect which it would produce upon them, in the days of their bereavement of his earthly presence. These words therefore, had no direct application to the Pharisees, as Stier seems to think, although addressed to the disciples in their hearing. *Days of the Son of man*, i. e. *days of his life-time on earth*. There is here an implied argument *a fortiori* (see N. on Matt. 5 : 15). If the disciples in times of discouragement and despondency should wish again the earthly presence of their Lord, how *much more* would this be true of the Pharisees and unbelieving Jews in the days of their dreadful calamities, when they shall discern and acknowledge too late the character and claims of Him whom they rejected. *Ye shall not see it*, i. e. the Son of man will return no more upon earth, as in the days of his humiliation. When he leaves it, at the close of his earthly mission, it is his final departure, until at the last day when he shall be "revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God." See Acts 3 : 21; 2-Thess. 1 : 7-10.

23. Our Lord goes on to state that after his departure from earth, there would arise many false Christs, whom his disciples would be urged to recognize and follow. But he strictly en-

lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

25 'But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

*q* Ma. 8 : 31; & 9 : 31; & 10 : 33; ch. 9 : 22.

joins upon them to pay no attention to these false claims, nor endeavor to satisfy their longing desire for the personal presence of the Messiah by giving heed to those miserable pretenders, who would throng the land, as the time of the righteous retribution of the nation drew near. See N. on Matt. 24 : 26, 27, for the verbal explanation of this and the following verse. The expression *go not after them*, is in the original *go not away from* the work or task, which I have commissioned you to perform. The next verb *nor follow*, designates the going *after* those false Christs. The former looks to the greatness of the work in which they are engaged, and which admits of no interruption; the latter, to the worthless pretensions of those whom they are urged to follow. Those who are disposed in our time to leave the plain teaching of the word of God, and follow in the wake of religious impostors and enthusiasts, would do well to reflect on this passage, and return to the ancient land-marks which they have forsaken. *For as the lightning*, &c. There can be no danger of mistaking the approach and presence of the true Messiah. His earthly presence in the days of his humiliation was as clear and manifest, as the lightning which flashes over and illuminates the whole heavens. The same would be true also of his manifestation to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, and his final approach at the last judgment. See Matt. 24 : 30, 31; 25 : 31. His presence would always manifest itself beyond the possibility of doubt.

25. The coming and presence of Christ, referred to in v. 24, will not be without its precursors and manifest signs. The

26 'And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28 'Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat,  
r Ge. 7; Mat. 24: 37. s Ge. 19.

discourse now assumes a distinct reference to a future coming of Jesus after his departure from earth. As a preliminary to this, the Son of man was to suffer many things, and be rejected of that generation. But the following context fastens the crime of his rejection, by implication, upon the whole world. The coming of our Lord was also to be preceded by a state of carnal ease and security, like that which went before the destruction of the old world by the deluge, and Sodom and Gomorrah, by fire from heaven. *But first must he suffer.* The reference is here to the moral necessity arising from the work of human redemption which our Lord had taken upon himself, and which required that he should suffer and die for the sins of the world. This, however, diminishes not in the least the guilt of those who crucified him, but gives it the more awful prominence. See 22: 22; Acts 2: 23.

26, 27. See Ns. on Matt. 24: 37-39. What in Luke is *the days of the Son of man*, is in Matthew, *the coming of the Son of man*. The universality of the flood is asserted in both passages, and furnishes valuable collateral evidence of the totality of that catastrophe, as recorded in Genesis.

28. The illustration from the carnal ease and security of the Sodomites, is of the same general tenor with that of the preceding reference to the guilty inhabitants of the old world. This illustration is wanting in Matthew. The union of the Sodomites with the wicked antediluvians, in illustration of the di-

they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29 But 'the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man 'is revealed.

31 In that day, he 'which shall

t Ge. 19: 16, 24. u 2 Th. 1: 7.  
s Mat. 24: 17; Ma. 18: 15.

vine vengeance against bold and open transgression, is also found in 2 Peter, 2: 5, 6. See also Jude, v. 7, compared with vs. 14, 15, where is undoubted reference to the execution of God's judgment upon the old world. *They eat, they drank*, denotes their ease and security; *they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded* shows that they were an active and enterprising, as well as sensual and corrupt community. This renders the illustration more suited to the times here referred to. There was an unwonted degree of active enterprise throughout the whole Roman Empire in the time of Christ's appearance on earth, and especially in the reign of Vespasian and Titus, by whom Jerusalem was destroyed. The increase of luxury and sensuality in the same period, is too well authenticated a fact to be disputed. What was true of the times of this subordinate appearance of our Lord to destroy Jerusalem, will no doubt be far more striking, when the teeming population of earth shall be arrested in their worldliness and sensuality by the trump of the archangel summoning them to judgment. The suddenness of the doom of Sodom is seen from the narrative in Gen. 19: 1-29. *Fire and brimstone*, i. e. sulphurous flames.

30. *Even thus* sudden and unexpected. *Is revealed*, i. e. makes his appearance. This same verb is used of the revelation or appearance of Antichrist, 2 Thess. 2: 3, 6, 8.

31. See N. on Matt. 24: 17, 18. *His stuff*. Not simply his household goods,

be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32 'Remember Lot's wife.

33 'Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

y Ge. 19 : 24.     s Mat. 10 : 39; & 16 : 25;  
Ma. 8 : 35; ch. 9 : 24; Jo. 12 : 25.

but his *valuables*, which could easily be removed, and which he would therefore feel greatly disinclined to leave behind in his flight. Dr. Thomson, in reference to this external stairway, says that it leads down outside of the house, but within the exterior court. "It enhances therefore the urgency of the flight recommended by our Lord, that he in effect says, though you must pass by the very door of your room, do not enter; escape for your life, without a moment's delay." *Return back* to remove any of his effects, or save any article however valuable. Matthew is here more specific, *return back to take his clothes*. This is implied in Luke. These directions are not exactly synonymous, although having the same general purport. The former refers to immediate flight from the city without suffering any thing to retard the act; the latter, to the danger of returning to the city, the scene of such danger and peril.

32. The example here cited as a warning against vacillation of purpose, indicated by the close of v. 31, is appropriately drawn from the family of Lot, who were fleeing from Sodom. The inhabitants of this city were adduced, as an example of the swift destruction which would come upon the Jews, when the Son of man should come to take vengeance upon his enemies. Lot's wife is also pointed out, as a warning against looking back with longing desire to return to a city doomed of God to be overthrown for its sins, which surpassed even those of

34 'I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35 Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left

a Mat. 24 : 40, 41; 1 Th. 4 : 17.

Sodom. See 10 : 12; Matt. 10 : 15; 11 : 24; Mark 6 : 11.

33. See N. on Matt. 10 : 39. See also 9 : 24. *Whosoever shall seek to save his life*. In Matthew, *he that findeth*. The general sentiment is the same, the expression taking its form in Luke from the context, which has reference to flight from impending danger. *Whosoever shall lose* (not *seek to lose*, for that is not required in the gospel) *his life* (for my sake, 9 : 24) *shall preserve it*. This shows that the *seeking to save life*, in the former clause, is the denial of Christ. There is no doubt that this saying, in a lower and subordinate sense, was illustrated on the one hand, in many a hair-breadth escape, and on the other, in many an unexpected and sudden death, where the chances combined with wise and vigorous action seemed to promise certain safety. But this is not the main idea of the passage. It looks to the recantation and denial of Christ in face of imminent danger, by which the natural life is preserved at the loss of the soul, the higher life within; and on the other hand, to that courage and devotion which meets death, when incurred for the testimony of Jesus, with unflinching firmness, looking to the recompenses of reward, the higher life beyond the grave.

34-36. See Ns. on Matt. 24 : 40, 41. The close and intimate fellowship denoted by two occupying the same bed, (or as some interpret it, *dining couch*), is a circumstance peculiar to Luke, and on account of its indication of a companionship of life or intimate friend-



37 And they answered and said unto him, 'Where, Lord?

3 Job 29 : 30; Mat. 24 : 28.

ship, rather than companionship in labor, is placed first of the three members. All refer to the wondrous providence of God, by which some would be rescued from the very jaws of death. This has primary reference to the general protection of God in times of peril and persecution, but like v. 33, from the connection may have a secondary allusion to the strange escapes and deliverances, which marked the history of the siege and capture of Jerusalem.

34. *Where, Lord?* i. e. where shall this separation for life and death take place? The apprehensions of the disciples were excited, and their alarm finds expression in the question here proposed. They had as yet received no intimation that Jerusalem was to be destroyed. This was first made known to them at his final departure from the temple, and subsequently when he sat upon the Mount of Olives, in full view of the city, was expanded, so as to include the minutest particulars in regard to its siege and the terrible calamity which attended it. Then the question was, *when* shall these things be? But now in their profound ignorance of every thing pertaining to these impending judgments, their first and most natural inquiry is *where, Lord?* They perhaps had some shadowy apprehension of impending danger to their country and chief city, but nothing definite had yet been communicated to them as to the scene and theatre of these dreadful manifestations. *Whosoever the body is*, &c. The reply of our Lord was somewhat enigmatical. The general truth however was plain and easy of comprehension, that *wherever* God's enemies were, there would be found the instruments of his wrath. The reference to the *eagles*, would naturally suggest to the mind of the disciples, the standard of the Roman armies, and thus give a clue to the interpretation of the prophecy. But it is quite doubtful whether at this time, they had any clear

And he said unto them, Whosoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

or definite notions of what he said. The prediction was but the foreshadowing of that great prophecy uttered afterwards upon the Mount of Olives, and was so general, that it conveyed little else to the minds of the disciples than an undefined sense of great and impending calamities. But when the light was reflected upon it from the awful prediction of the doom of Jerusalem made on Olivet, they could not but refer this to the same events there predicted. Roos says that in the term *body* (i. e. dead carcass), the apostles could discern how the Jewish people appeared in the sight of God.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

1-14. THE PARABLES OF THE IMPORTUNATE WIDOW, AND THE PHARISEE AND PUBLICAN. *Perea*. That these parables, especially the first, grew out of the preceding conversation, is evident from v. 7, where reference is evidently had to the troubles and persecutions, which should precede the coming of the Son of man, in the promise that a just and holy God would avenge his elect, although deliverance might be long deferred. In one particular this parable bears a close resemblance to that of the unjust steward. In that parable an illustration of the wisdom, energy, and forethought, with which men should fulfil the duties of their stewardship to God, is drawn from the example of an unjust, but shrewd, active, and energetic steward. In this parable the power of importunate prayer is illustrated by the effect, which the importunity of a widow had upon an unjust judge. In neither parable is any license or palliation offered for injustice; but the reference, in the one case, was simply to the prompt and vigorous action of the steward; and in the other, to the power of importunity over the unjust and wicked judge. The connection of this parable with the closing verses of the preceding chapter, would refer it to the importunate fer-

## CHAPTER XVIII.

AND he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought "always to pray, and not to faint;

a Ch. 11 : 5; & 21 : 84; Ro. 12 : 12; Ep. 6 : 18; Col. 4 : 2; 1 Th. 5 : 17.

veny, with which prayer should be offered by those who would escape the dreadful calamities attending the coming of the Son of man to destroy Jerusalem. But a deeper and more enlarged significancy is to be sought, in its application to all believers in a state of discouragement and despondency, in regard to the evils which beset them, and the apparent rejection of their prayers by God.

1. *To this end.* These words are supplied in our common version. But the original requires this or a similar phrase to complete the sense. The literal translation is: *he spake a parable in reference to the duty of men to always pray, &c.* The words therefore *to this end*, should not have been italicized in the English translation. *Ought always to pray*, i. e. to have the spirit of prayer in uninterrupted and lively exercise. The overt act of prayer is not here referred to, for it would be impossible for that to suffer no interruption. The sentiment is precisely like the one in 1 Thess. 5 : 17, and refers to the urgency and importunity with which men may and should press their suit with the Most High, even when He seems to have turned a deaf ear to their prayer, and sent them away empty from the mercy seat. *And not to faint*; literally, *to become bad*, i. e. prove weak or faint-hearted.

2. *Which feared not God, &c.* The arrangement of the words in the original is very emphatic, *God not fearing, and man not regarding.* He stood in no awe whatever of God. He abstained from no unjust decision, through fear of offending Him. Equally reckless was he, in regard to the estimation in which he was held by his fellow-men. Little could be hoped from such a man, especially when the demands of justice interfered with his ease or self-interest.

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man :

3 And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

3. *A widow.* She was a feeble and unprotected widow, and yet, by the force of her importunity she obtained at the hands of this unjust judge, what doubtless, if requested but once, would have been denied to the most powerful and influential of her fellow-citizens. The fact that she was a *widow*, gives therefore force and pertinency to the parable. *In that city.* The judge had doubtless seen this poor widow very frequently. She was no stranger to him. He could more easily put aside her claims, than those of one, who had a stranger's acknowledged right to receive a redress of wrongs. *She came.* This is an unfortunate translation; for upon this hinges the whole parable. The tense in the original, as well as the context, requires the translation, *she kept coming*, and this prepares the way for the *troubleth me and continual coming*, in v. 5. *Avenge me, &c.* Give judgment in my favor against my adversary. It is here presupposed that her cause had been adjudicated, and that all which remained was for judgment to be pronounced in her favor, according to the provisions of the law. This, in accordance with the character here given him, the unjust judge had delayed to do, and the woman was still suffering from the oppression or ground of complaint, whatever it might be, for which she was entitled to redress. It is a very important feature in this parable, that the importunity of the woman was exercised in a just cause. Had she petitioned the judge for an illegal exercise of his functions, the case would have been far different, and her importunity would only have served to enhance the wickedness of her request. The word *avenge* in its early use did not include the idea of *revenge*, but simply that of satisfaction for an injury re-

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow

δ Ch. 11: 8.

troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

ceived. This is its sense here. Revenge was not what the widow sought, but a legal redress of injury. Webster and Wilkinson remark that "the repeated oppressions to which widows are exposed in the East, are indicated by the warnings given in the Scriptures, respecting the treatment of them." See Exod. 22: 22; Deut. 27: 19. The prophetic writings abound in allusions of this sort.

4. *For a while* (literally, *for a time*) is erroneously translated by some *for a long time*. This is contrary to the scope of the parable, which requires that the tardy justice of this wicked magistrate, should not be able to resist a long time the urgent and continued appeals of the widow. *Though I fear not God, &c.* is one of the most emphatic touches, which could possibly be given to his godless character. He acknowledges his disregard of God and man, but it is for the purpose of avowing, that he had no other reason or motive for espousing this woman's cause than her troublesome importunity. He makes this statement to himself, as though he would be ashamed to bear about with him the consciousness of acting in this case, from any other motive than the one here stated. His very language shows his belief in the existence of God, but he makes the most open and shameless avowal of his utter contempt of the divine authority. This is an awful picture of a wicked, heaven-daring man, and yet it gives great emphasis to the point here to be illustrated, the force of *importunity*, which could prevail on such a judge to do a right action.

5. *Troubleth me*; literally, *affords me trouble*. The word rendered *trouble* is very emphatic, signifying a *beating* as of the breast in trouble, and hence is put itself, for grief, toil, labor, trouble.

*Continual coming*; literally, *coming to the end*, i. e. forever. The judge with a slight exaggeration of language, such as one naturally uses, when under the influence of impatience, ill-humor, or any excitement, expresses his fear that the woman would harass and annoy him to the end of his life, or as we say, *trouble him to death*. This shows the strength and fervor of her importunity, and it is here that the point of the parable is to be sought. The unjust judge yielded solely to her importunity, what he had long denied on the score of justice. *Lest she weary*; literally, *lest she smite me under the eye* (familiarily *give me a black eye*), which has led some absurdly to suppose, that the unjust judge contemplated personal violence from this woman, infuriated by his refusal to do her justice. Some have gone so far as to translate, *lest in the end she may even proceed to blows*. The words *to the end*, as stated above, qualify the participle *coming*, in the sense of *continually*, *repeatedly*, and the verb has here a metaphorical sense, *to vex* or *annoy*, by a course of action similar in effect to repeated blows. Tindal translates it *hagge on me*, i. e. act the hag with me, vex and harass me. The word itself is expressive of the rough and unrefined character of this godless judge, and I cannot agree with Stier, that this verse shows him to be better than he had predicated of himself, because it was like a blow in his face to see this woman approaching to renew her cry for relief. The expression is indicative of his utter regardlessness of all considerations, other than what affect his personal comfort, which was destroyed by the harassing importunity of this woman.

6. The design of this parable is to illustrate the prevalent power of importunity. We should therefore have ex-

7 And 'shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

c Ro. 8: 10.

pected the application to have been commenced with *see what this widow accomplished*, but it is *hear what the unjust judge saith*. The attention is directed to the effect of this repeated and earnest entreaty on the unjust judge, because here lies the point of the parable, and the *a fortiori* inference of the readiness of a just and holy God to avenge his elect, is brought out by contrast more prominently and emphatically. *Hear*. Give strict attention and reflect upon. *What the unjust judge saith*, i. e. his strange declaration of the power of importunity, even when applied by a feeble woman.

7. *And shall not God, &c.* Here the argument *a fortiori* (see N. on Matt. 5: 15) is twofold. If an *unjust judge* will yield to the force of continued entreaty, how much more will *God* do this, whose infinite justice prompts him to redress every grievance and wrong, and with whom the workers of iniquity can find no favor. And if the unjust judge would do this for a *poor widow* for whom he had no tender regard, and whom he doubtless deemed wholly beneath his notice, and whom he never would have noticed had she not disturbed his quiet, by her repeated solicitations for the justice due her, how much more would a faithful and benevolent God interfere for the relief of *those whom he had elected* as the objects of his protecting love. *Avenge*. Maintain the right of, see that redress is obtained. *His own elect*, i. e. those whom he has chosen to salvation. This is its higher and deeper signification. Those who refer this parable to the destruction of Jerusalem, find here the same reference as in Matt. 24: 22 (on which see Note). But it would reduce this grand promise of God to hear the cry of his people, to a very restricted compass, to refer it to the temporary deliverance of his people at the siege of Jerusalem. It must rather be

8 I tell you 'that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

d He. 10: 37; 2 Pe. 8: 8, 9.

interpreted as illustrative of the great and universal truth, that God is the Protector and Defender of his people, and although he defers for wise and sufficient reasons, his merciful interposition until they are led to cry out, "How long wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever?" (Ps. 13: 1); "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood?" (Rev. 6: 10); "Why withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom" (Ps. 74: 11), yet the promise is sure, and the day of deliverance will come. *His own* imparts great emphasis to the tender regard, which God is supposed to feel for those whom he calls his own. *Cry* for help. Importunate prayer often finds utterance in loud crying and supplication. Compare Heb. 5: 7, and the agony of our Lord in the garden, to which the quotation mainly refers. *Day and night*, i. e. continually. This refers to the *always* in v. 1, and has the same limitation of interpretation, so far as the absolute continuance of the actual exercise of prayer is concerned. *Though he bear long with them*, i. e. is slow to avenge them. God's delay is the result of a wise and gracious forbearance; that of the unjust judge, of callousness and unconcern in regard to the demands of the poor widow. God's forbearance looks to the ultimate good of those towards whom it is exercised, the hard-hearted judge had no concern whatever for the condition of the poor woman, but only thought how he could most effectually rid himself of her troublesome importunity. We also are justified in referring God's forbearance, in part at least, to the merciful design of giving the enemies of his people time to repent, ere the threatened vengeance descends upon them.

8. *I tell you, &c.* Our Lord here affirms what was so clearly taught in

9 And he spake this parable unto certain 'which trusted in

Ch. 10: 29; & 16: 13.

the parable. The glorious truth, which has cheered many a heart darkened by the clouds of oppression and adversity, was not left by our Lord to be obscured by one shadow of doubt, but was affirmed by his emphatic *I say unto you*, and thus rendered available to the weakest exercise of faith in the divine protection. *Speedily*. In comparison with the duration of peace and freedom from oppression, which shall follow this divine interposition in favor of the elect, it may well be said to have taken place speedily. As the days of our earthly pilgrimage drag heavily by, the promised help seems to be long deferred, but in reference to the eternity to come, in comparison with which the longest life on earth is but a hand's breadth, the promise is of speedy fulfillment. *Nevertheless*, i. e. notwithstanding such an assurance, to which the righteous may always cling in times of trial and peril. *When the Son of man cometh*. This is to be taken in the more general sense of our Lord's coming to judgment, yet it is applicable also to his coming at the hour of death, and his still more subordinate advent to destroy Jerusalem. *Shall he find, &c.* The question implies doubt. But as our Lord in the exercise of his Omniscience knew that the elect would possess, to a greater or less extent, the faith here spoken of, it must be regarded as rhetorically put to show how rare and divine a gift was this living, confiding faith in the divine pledge of protection. It is no ordinary exercise of faith, which in the face of overwhelming trials and imminent peril, can awaken and sustain the long-continued, importunate prayer here referred to. The word *faith* has the article in the original, which refers it to faith in the special light in which it has been held up in the parable.

9. This parable was addressed to the multitude, among whom were doubtless persons belonging to both the classes here represented. Stier contends that

themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

the words *certain which trusted in themselves*, are not to be referred to the Pharisees as an exclusive class, but to some even of his disciples, who were in the company, and who, hearing what efficacy was inherent in importunate prayer, were puffed up with the conceit of their good works, as the basis on which they could offer to great advantage this sort of prayer. To this we may add, that if the Pharisees had been particularly addressed, our Lord would hardly have rebuked them by an example drawn from one of their own class, and indeed such a reference would have taken away the very feature which constitutes the parable. It would have been a plain and open charge against the self-righteous spirit of that sect, instead of a parabolic representation of the fact. But if the Pharisees were not particularly addressed, the parable is aimed directly against the Pharisaic spirit, which to a greater or less extent has always been prevalent in the world, and even in the church of Christ. The lesson of the parable is one of general application, and is at war with every assumption of superior holiness from a comparison of ourselves with our fellowmen. Instead of the translation, *unto certain*, Bloomfield translates *concerning certain*. This rendering is less faithful to the original, and does not suit as well the general wants of the passage as the common translation. Our Lord spoke to the multitude, but with primary reference to those who trusted to their own righteousness for salvation, and looked down in haughty pride upon those whom they regarded as great sinners in the sight of God. This self-righteous spirit was perhaps beginning to make its insidious appearance within the circle of his disciples, which made the parable more timely and necessary. As they had been previously cautioned against the admission of the Pharisaic leaven of hypocrisy (see 12: 1), now they are warned by the example of a proud, conceited, self-

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and

righteous Pharisee, against every approach of spiritual pride. The clause, *that they were righteous*, denotes the ground of their confidence in themselves.

10. *Two men.* There is no difference in the sight of God between the proud and haughty Pharisee and the poor despised publican. They were both men, belonging to the same sinful race, and alike under the condemnation of the divine law. *Went up into the temple, &c.* Both these men indicated by this act their reverence for God's house, as the house of prayer (Isa. 56 : 7 : Matt. 21 : 13). With the Pharisee, however, it was only an external reverence, having no place in his heart. Not so with the publican. To him it was none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven (Gen. 28 : 17). Thus far however no external distinguishing traits appear, by which any estimate can be placed upon their comparative characters. They are both men, who have gone up to the temple for the specific object of prayer. *The one a Pharisee, &c.* Now at a single word, they are shown to be in human estimation, almost heaven-wide asunder. The one belonged to a class, whose sanctity was a matter of universal repute; the other, to a class regarded by all as notoriously wicked. What other conclusion would any one have formed, than that the Pharisee would have been the one upon whom God's blessing and favor would have rested, as the result of this act of devotion?

11. *Stood and prayed.* No stress is to be laid upon the posture of prayer here spoken of. Standing was the usual attitude, although the suppliant sometimes kneeled (1 Kings, 8 : 54 ; 2 Chron. 6 : 13 ; Dan. 6 : 40 ; Ezra, 9 : 5), and sometimes prostrated himself upon the ground (Exod. 34 : 8 ; 2 Chron. 29 : 29 ; Ps. 95 : 6 ; Matt. 26 : 39). The standing posture in religious services has its

prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, un-  
/ Pa. 135 : 2    g Is. 1 : 15 ; & 58 : 2 ; Re. 8 : 17.

foundation in the Oriental custom and form of expression to *stand before the king*, a symbol of one's readiness to receive his orders and do his bidding. The priests and Levites were said "to stand before God," as indicative of the religious services which it was their part to perform (see Deut. 10 : 8 ; 17 : 12 ; Jer. 15 : 1 ; 18 : 20 ; Ps. 24 : 3). This position was therefore one of the highest respect and reverence, and was aptly assumed, when a request was to be made of an earthly monarch, or prayer to be offered to God. *With himself*, not *to himself*, as some interpret the expression, making *himself* to be the one to whom his prayer was addressed, but *by* or *to*, as when a person engages in secret or silent prayer, gives mental utterance to his words, or speaks so as not to be heard by others. The passage is also susceptible of the translation, *concerning or in reference to himself*. The prayer was nothing more than a rehearsal in the ear of God of his own good deeds, and hence it was not *for*, but *concerning* himself that it was offered. Such I am inclined to regard as the interpretation. We must not suppose that the prayer was offered aloud, a thing which Meyer remarks he would hardly have dared to do. The words *with himself*, are constructed by some with *stood* (literally *standing*), being contrasted with *standing afar off*, in v. 13. *Prayed thus* : literally *prayed these* (words). His prayer consisted in the expression of the words here given, and nothing more. Still with the most caustic irony, our Lord styles it a prayer—he *prayed*; the publican only smote upon his breast, *saying*. In his humility and self-abasement he would not claim it as a prayer. He was not worthy in his own estimation to address God in prayer, and hence with downcast eye and a gesture of self-renunciation, he said, God be merciful to me a sinner.—See N. on v. 13. *Other men*, or more lit-

just, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing

erally, *the rest of men*) with the exception of the Pharisees, to which class this man belonged. He may even have considered himself in pious works above the generality of the Pharisees. *Extortioners*. One of the sins which our Lord charged upon the Pharisees was extortion (Matt. 23 : 25), and yet so unacquainted was this man with his own heart, that he thanks God in particular, that he was free from this sin. *Unjust*. Bloomfield remarks that "*Extortioner* here denotes one who injures another by force; *unjust* has reference to one who *overreaches* him by *fraud*, or under a semblance of justice." *Adulterers*. This is referred to as being a great and prevalent sin of the time. In the estimation of the Pharisees, it consisted only in the overt act, and hence this man makes open boast before God of his freedom from this sin. But in the light of the interpretation of the seventh commandment by our Lord (Matt. 5 : 28), his true character for purity was probably quite different from what he esteemed it to be. *Or even as this publican*. This is added by way of climax and illustration. The publican was supposed to embody in himself the sins here mentioned, and many others besides. The word *even* does not imply that the publican was less wicked than the extortioners, unjust, and adulterers, just before alluded to, but that he was the living embodiment of these sins, and worthy of being pointed to as an example of great wickedness.

12. Having rehearsed some of his negative virtues as the ground of thanksgiving to God, the Pharisee now proceeds to recount his positive and personal merits. He makes no allusion whatever to the demands of the law as relating to rectitude and mercy, nor speaks at all of its more common and general external duties, but passes at

afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

once to works of supererogation, as though he had made God even his debtor. *I fast twice in the week*. The only fast prescribed in the Mosaic law, was that on the great day of atonement, the tenth of the seventh month. (Levit. 16 : 29; Numb. 29 : 7). In addition to this national fast, four others were instituted after the captivity, one, in memory of the capture of Jerusalem; the second, commemorative of the burning of the Temple; the third, in memory of the death of Gedaliah (Jer. 41 : 2); the fourth, in remembrance of the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem. These fasts are referred to in Zech. 8 : 19, where it is also predicted, that they shall be turned into cheerful feasts. The fasts of this Pharisee must, therefore, have been voluntary ones. These, as appears from the Rabbis, were observed on the second and fifth days, that is Mondays and Thursdays, the days on which Moses was supposed to have ascended Mount Sinai. These fasts doubtless were attended with all the external marks of self-mortification, referred to by our Lord in Matt. 6 : 16. *I give tithes, &c.* As no tithes, except of the fruit of the field and the cattle, were required by law, the Pharisee's boast, as in the fasts which he observed, referred to works of supererogation. He therefore makes no reference whatever to the requirements and sanctions of God's holy law, but enumerates what he has done over and above its demands.

13. *Standing afar off*. This shows his humility and sense of unworthiness. If he was a Pagan, as is highly probable, he stood in the court of the Gentiles (see N. on Matt. 21 : 12), but if he was a Jew, such was his timid humility, that he did not presume to approach the place where stood the Pharisee and other chief men. *Would not lift, &c.* The Pharisee offered his prayer with all

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: *for every one*

that exalteth himself shall be

A Job 22 : 29; Mat. 23 : 12; ch. 14 : 11; Ja. 4 : 6; 1 Pe. 5 : 5, 6.

the parade and show referred to in Matt. 6 : 5. He had probably raised both his hands and eyes to heaven, as he was recounting the leading sins of which he was free, and his good deeds over and above what was required in the law. But the publican had such a sense of his unworthiness, that he did not presume to raise his hands or his eyes unto heaven, which would seem to indicate his acceptance with God (see John 17 : 1). He looked upon the ground, in the deepest self-abasement. *But smote upon* (literally *kept smiting upon*) *his breast*. This was the outward expression of his sorrow for sin, and sense of exposedness to God's righteous displeasure. Smiting upon the breast was with the orientals indicative of great grief. See 23 : 48. *Saying*. He doubtless said this mentally, or in so low a tone, as to be heard by no one else. *Me a sinner*; literally, *the sinner*, as though he was the only or chief sinner on earth. Some, however, take the article here in its generic use, *me, who am of the class of sinners*. See N. on Matt. 8 : 20. Here was no self-laudation, no enumeration of acts of piety, no thanks that he was better than other men. But in the place of this self-righteous parade, we have deep and genuine contrition for sin, a sense of personal ill-desert, a plea for forgiveness, in the fact that he is a sinner, and therefore standing in infinite need of pardon. What a contrast between the two! But not greater than the difference between their spiritual condition, when they returned from the temple to their respective homes. The one went away justified in the sight of God; the other, with the divine displeasure still resting upon him.

14. *I tell you*. The strength of this affirmation denotes how strange and incredible to Jewish ears, such an annunciation as this might be expected to be. *This man*. The one last mentioned, the publican. *Went down from the temple*. See v. 10. The expression here

comprises in its signification, a return to the ordinary duties of life. *Justified*, i. e. accepted and approved in the sight of God. His repentance and self-abasement were such, that God could justify him through the merits of his Son Jesus Christ (see Rom. 3 : 26). He prayed for and obtained forgiveness. *Rather than the other*. The reading in the original is various, but I cannot doubt that our English version is based on the genuine text. The word *rather*, supplied in our common translation, is founded on an ellipsis quite common in the Greek language. The form of the comparison too is according to Hebrew usage, when absolute negation even is intended. The contrast between the two is preserved to the last. Their sense of personal desert evinced in the language and spirit of their prayers, was essentially different, and as a consequence their standing in the sight of God was equally diverse. The publican returned to his house, with the sweet peace and serenity of one who was accepted of God; the Pharisee, the same arrogant, conceited, self-righteous person, that he was when he offered his prayer, and even more than before the object of the divine displeasure. The words *rather than*, do not mean that the Pharisee was accepted in any sense, but directly the reverse. The idea is that there was such essential difference in the religious act of these two men, that one only could be acceptable with God. Such was the deep self-abasement of the publican, that his was the prayer which was accepted, *rather than* the one so offensive to God as that of the Pharisee. *For every one, &c.* See N. on this proverbial expression, in Matt. 23 : 12.

15-17. JESUS RECEIVES AND BLESSES LITTLE CHILDREN. *Perea*. See Ns. on Matt. 19 : 13-15; Mark 10 : 13-16. After a divergence of several chapters, Luke now resumes the narration, much in the order in which it is found in Matthew and Mark.



35 ¶ And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto

5 Mat. 20 : 29; Ma. 10 : 46.

29-31; Mark 10 : 46-52. The ambitious request of James and John through their mother (see Matt. 20 : 20-28; Mark 10 : 35-45), is to be placed between vs. 34 and 35 of Luke.

35. *As he was come nigh, &c.* The apparent discrepancy between this statement, and that of Matthew and Mark, may be removed by reading this, *while he was (yet) nigh unto Jericho*, on his way out of the city. This does no violence to the language, and is natural and simple. Webster and Wilkinson fall in with Bengel and Trench's mode of reconciling these statements, which is this: Of the two blind men mentioned in Matt. 20 : 30, one cried to him as he drew near to the city, but was not then healed. On the morrow, when the Lord left the city, this man again importuned Jesus to be healed, and was in consequence restored to sight together with another blind man who had joined him, so that the two were healed at once (Matt. 20 : 29). But this solution is attended with so many improbable circumstances, that I cannot admit it as the true one. In the whole history of our Lord, there was no example of the putting off until another day, the relief of one who cried to him as this poor blind man did. Does not Luke's narrative expressly state, that it was when the blind man was so clamorous in his piteous cries for help, that he was commanded by those who preceded Jesus to hold his peace, that our Lord paused in his way, and commanded him to be brought unto him, and healed him? How is it possible to reconcile this with a theory, which makes Jesus repel or neglect this poor blind man, until the next day, as he was leaving the city? But all this is avoided by supposing it to have taken place, as our Lord was leaving the city, and that Luke, for some reason unknown to us, anticipated its relation, so that in his gospel the event apparently took place as Jesus was entering the city. We have seen in several instances, that

Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging :

Luke's arrangement depended more upon the connection of thought, or some law of association in his own mind, than in the strict chronological sequence of events. A notable instance of this is found in the return of the Seventy, which he relates as having taken place in Galilee (see 10 : 17 compared with 13 : 22), while as a matter of fact it was some time after he had taken his final departure from that region, that they returned to him. See N. on 10 : 17; 21 : 37, 38. Other instances of a departure from chronological order, are found in Luke. Is it strange then that he should relate this miracle a little out of its proper place, especially as it stands so disconnected from the thread of the general narration as to make no chasm or confuse in the least the train of events? It mattered very little in itself, whether the miracle was related before or after the words of 19 : 1. The features of the miracle accord fully with the relation of the same by Matthew and Mark, and its slight removal from strict chronological order is consonant with the habit of Luke, as is susceptible of abundant proof. If this solution is unsatisfactory, I would suggest another, which I do not remember to have seen in any exposition of the passage. If we consider 19 : 1 as parenthetic, in the sense of, (before this transaction) *Jesus having entered was passing through Jericho*, and then make the visit to the house of Zaccheus (19 : 2-27) to constitute a part of this parenthesis, as though the writer after his account of the healing of the blind man, had retraced his steps to take up an incident which happened when our Lord was passing through the village, then Luke would synchronize exactly with Matthew and Mark, the direct narrative being resumed in 19 : 28, answering to Mark 10 : 52 (end). To briefly recapitulate then, we would render *was come nigh unto Jericho* (18 : 35), by *when he was nigh unto Jericho* as he was leaving the

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou Son of David*, have mercy on me.

40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto

city, and either suppose Luke to have rehearsed the miracle in 18 : 35-43, by way of anticipation, or that 19 : 1-27 is a parenthetic resumption of an incident which took place, while he was yet passing through the city, and before his healing of the blind man.

*A certain blind man.* Matthew speaks of two blind men. The apparent discrepancy which Olshausen pronounces irreconcilable, is removed on the same principle of interpretation which was applied to the demoniacs of Gadara (Matt. 8 : 20, on which see Note).

36. *Hearing the multitude, &c.* This graphic circumstance, indicating the large numbers and joyful acclamations of the multitude which attended Jesus, is peculiar to Luke. Such great numbers and under such jubilant excitement, could not fail to arrest the quick ear of the blind man. *He asked of persons who stood by, what it* (i. e. the noise of this great multitude passing by) *meant.* Blind men are proverbially inquisitive, and this too, considering the circumstances, was a very natural inquiry.

39. *Which went before.* Of the great multitude who accompanied Jesus on his way to Jerusalem, some preceded, others followed him. His disciples and especially the Twelve formed his immediate band of attendants. When the blind man who sat by the wayside begging, heard the noise of the approaching multitude, and was informed who it was that was passing by, he set up his cry for help, which those who were at the head of the procession attempted to check. But instead of yielding to the rebuke which they administered for this outcry, he called upon Jesus for help in still louder and more suppliant tones, until as our Lord came nearer he heard

him, and commanded him to be brought unto him. As to the cause of the rebuke which the blind man here received from those who preceded Jesus, it is not to be referred, as some strangely think, to his use of the Messianic address *Son of David*, for those who rebuked him were the friends of Jesus, and ready themselves to give him this Messianic title; but it resulted simply from the desire, that the procession might not be delayed by an affair of comparatively such trivial importance, as the giving sight to a poor blind man. They were in great haste to reach Jerusalem, where they anticipated a public and open avowal by Jesus of his Messiahship, even perhaps his assumption of the regal dignity, and the discomfiture and expulsion from the city and land of all his enemies. With such a prospect before them, arousing their enthusiasm to the highest pitch, what were the interests of one man, and that too a blind beggar, compared with the glorious realization of the national splendor, peace, and prosperity predicted by the Old Testament seers, and now on the very eve of being ushered in. The cure of a thousand blind Bartimeuses were an insufficient reason for a single hour's delay of the nation's emancipation from the Roman yoke, and the elevation of Judea to a rank among the independent nations of the earth. It was not then because their hearts were steeled to pity for this blind beggar, that they rebuked him, but because they regarded the occasion too important to admit of any delay in their journey to Jerusalem.

40. *Jesus stood.* The contrast is very strong, between the readiness of Jesus to pause for the sake of healing this blind man, whose cry had fallen

him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: 'thy faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed  
o Ch. 17: 19.

upon his ear, and the eager haste of the multitude to reach Jerusalem. Mark (10: 49-50) introduces an incident omitted by Matthew and Luke, to which the reader is referred, as one of peculiar and touching tenderness.

42. *Receive thy sight.* In Mark, *go thy way*. Both forms of expression were doubtless used. *Hath saved thee.* Mark: *hath made thee whole*. The variation is only in the English translation, the words being the same in the original. See N. on Matt. 9: 22.

43. *Glorifying God, &c.* See N. on Matt. 9: 8. The miracle was so wondrous in itself, and of such condescension, as being wrought upon a poor blind man, that following his example, the whole multitude caught up and echoed his ascriptions of praise to God, for sending to his people such a Teacher and Deliverer. This burst of triumphal acclamation to God is found only in Luke, and is a fitting close to one of the most touching and benign miracles which our Lord wrought while on earth. See N. on Matt. 20: 34. It shows also that the obstacles which were thrown at first in the way of the blind man's approach to Jesus, were not such as arose from want of sympathy and pity for the poor man, but from the public considerations which have above been glanced at.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

1. *And Jesus entered, &c.* If, as has been remarked, the blind man was healed when Jesus was leaving the

him, 'glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

AND *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho.

2 And, behold, *there was* a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

d Ch. 5: 26; Ac. 4: 21; & 11: 18.

city—by which supposition the apparent discrepancy between Luke and the other evangelists is removed—we must suppose either that Luke related the miracle by way of anticipation, or that vs. 1-27 are parenthetic, and serve to bring out an incident which Luke omitted to relate in its proper place, before the account of the healing of the blind man. The verb *passed*, should be rendered *was passing*. The visit to Zaccheus was not after he had passed through Jericho, but while he was proceeding through that portion of the city where this publican resided.

2-28. THE VISIT OF OUR LORD TO ZACCHEUS. PARABLE OF THE TEN TALENTS. *Jericho*. This incident and the parable spoken in connection with it are found only in Luke. It took place, when Jesus was passing through one of the portions of the town where dwelt this man, whose curiosity to see our Lord was followed by such remarkable results.

2. *Behold*. This word serves to call attention to the incident about to be related. See N. on Matt. 1: 20. *A man*. The Greek word is here employed for a *man*, emphatically so, *a man indeed*, which shows that Zaccheus was a person of consideration. That he was a Jew is seen from his name, which is the same with Zaccai in Ezra 2: 9; Neh. 7: 14, and also by v. 9, although some expositors regard what is said there, as meaning nothing more than that he was truly and spiritually a son of Abraham. The implication is clear that he was Abraham's son also by natural de-

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

scent. He was a *chief among the publicans*, i. e. if not a farmer of taxes, which was generally confined to the Roman Equites, yet a *sub farmer*, or general superintendent, holding his commission direct from the Roman authorities, or acting as the agent for some person of distinction at Rome, who had bid off the collection of taxes in Judea, as was customary in those times. Alford thinks that he was an administrator of the revenue derived from *balsam*, which was produced in abundance in the neighborhood. But this rests on mere conjecture. Such high officers of the revenue as Zaccheus, oftentimes attained equal rank with the Roman Equites, and it is to this class that Josephus (*Jewish Wars* II. 14 § 9) has reference, when he says that Florus had Jews of the equestrian order whipped and nailed to the cross before his tribunal. *He was rich*. The means by which he amassed his wealth are seen in v. 8.

3. *He sought to see Jesus*. The tense of the verb *sought*, requires the translation *he was* or *kept trying* to see Jesus, and refers to his unavailing efforts on this occasion to accomplish his wish. He determines however not to relinquish his purpose. His curiosity to see a person of whom he had heard such a wonderful report, is too much excited to permit him to be baffled in his wish, by his diminutive stature. There are many points both of contrast and resemblance between this man and Nicodemus, which Stier traces with great minuteness: "Zaccheus has less in him than Nicodemus, for he will merely at the first see and not approach; nevertheless he has at the same time *more* than Nicodemus, and is more easily entirely won. As a token of his inward earnestness better than Nicodemus, Zaccheus comes in open day, in the middle of the town, not without spectators, for the high official is not above climb-

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

ing a tree as one of the curious sight-seeing multitude." I am inclined to think, that this excellent expositor makes a little too much of this desire on the part of Zaccheus to see Jesus. Curiosity was unquestionably the ruling motive of the act, as seems clear from the words, *sought to see Jesus who he was*, i. e. what sort of person he was, and how he appeared and acted. This seems clearly to indicate nothing more than the indulgence of a natural curiosity to see a personage so celebrated as Jesus, and who was now passing with so large a retinue through the place. *The press*, i. e. the crowds which gathered around Jesus to catch his words as he conversed by the way. This central and surrounding group would almost entirely conceal Jesus from the view of those, who stood by the wayside to catch a glimpse of him as he passed along. This obstacle in the way of gaining a full view of our Lord as he passed along, was still further increased in the case of Zaccheus, by his lowness of stature.

4. *Ran before* the approaching company. He did this in order to select and secure his position, so as to be in a state of readiness to see Jesus as he passed by. *Sycamore tree*, more frequently called the *sycamine tree*. The body of this tree being large and its branches numerous, and growing nearly horizontally, rendered it easy to climb. See N. on 17 : 6. *He was to pass that way*. The road ran along by this tree, so near that some of its huge branches overshadowed it. Dr. Thomson (*Land and Book*, vol. i. p. 22) says, "Nothing is easier than to climb into these sycamores; and, in fact, here is a score of boys and girls in this one; and, as its giant arms stretch quite across the road, those on them can look directly down upon any crowd passing beneath. It is admirably adapted to the purpose for which Zaccheus selected it."

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down ; for to day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and

came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be a guest with a man that is a sinner.

α Mat. 9 : 11 ; ch. 5 : 30.

5. *He looked up, &c.* It is not absolutely necessary to suppose any supernatural knowledge here exerted by Jesus. Zaccheus might have been known to some one of the company and pointed out to our Lord. But no one can deny that our Lord's perfect knowledge of the state of this man's mind, indicated on the face of the narration, must have been supernatural. His person, too, even though not a word had been spoken by those around Jesus, might well and easily have been known by Him, whose eye had formerly rested on Nathaniel under the fig-tree (John 1 : 48). The act of looking up must not be regarded, then, as the result of chance, but as a part of the intention or purpose of Jesus to become the guest of Zaccheus. He had a full and perfect knowledge of the position and circumstances of the man before him, and it was with the divine and benevolent intention of visiting his heart and house with salvation, that he looked up and addressed him as here related. *Make haste and come down.* There was no further need of his remaining in that place of observation, as Jesus was about to stop and spend the day at his house. The next clause, therefore, very properly begins with *for*, as denoting the reason why he was to descend hastily from the tree. The hospitable reception to the house of Zaccheus, which this direction of our Lord assumes would be given to him and his disciples, shows that Jesus was not ignorant of the state of his mind, or his ability to entertain so large a company. Jesus did not ask him, therefore, if it would be agreeable or convenient for him to receive him and his disciples as guests, but from his perfect knowledge of the man's heart and circumstances of external condition, he takes this for grant-

ed, and at once bids him descend from the tree, and conduct him as a guest to his house. As Jesus was passing through Jericho without making any pause, it is probable that this incident took place in the latter part of the day, and that he spent the night with Zaccheus.

6. *He made haste*, as he was commanded. This shows his ready and joyful obedience. We are hardly warranted, however, to infer from this, that the work of grace had yet been wrought in his soul. The words *received him joyfully*, are to be attributed rather to his sense of the honor conferred upon him, by having so distinguished a guest as Jesus at his house. *Received him* as a guest into his house, which was probably not far off, and situated on the road leading to Bethany and Jerusalem.

7. *When they saw it, &c.* These murmurers must have belonged to the company of Jesus, and their conduct on this occasion showed that they were not yet fully emancipated from that Pharisaic pride, which made them look upon all intercourse with publicans as a sort of moral defilement. Their murmurs did not betoken any enmity whatever to Jesus, but their doubts as to the propriety of his being the guest of so notorious a publican as Zaccheus. Some may be inclined to class these murmurers with the Pharisees, who seem to have attended Jesus with scarcely any interruption, to watch his words and actions, and discover some ground of accusation against him. See N. on v. 39. There is no objection to this view, but yet it seems more natural to refer it here to the company of Jesus' friends, who could not conceal their displeasure, that he should so seem to forget the glorious destiny before

8 And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken

any thing from any man by <sup>b</sup> false accusation, <sup>c</sup> I restore *him* fourfold.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. 3: 14.

<sup>c</sup> Ex. 22: 1; 1 Sa. 12: 8; 2 Sa. 12: 6.

him of being hailed by the people as their Messianic King in Jerusalem, that he should turn aside to partake of the hospitalities of a publican. *That is a sinner.* Publicans and sinners were classed together, and hence to be a publican was equivalent to being a sinner. See N. on Matt. 5: 46.

8. *Zaccheus stood, &c.* Some expositors think that Zaccheus was converted while he was on the sycamore-tree, and that he expressed his determination to make amends for his past misconduct, when our Lord first entered his house. But as he had ascended the tree from motives of mere curiosity to see Jesus, and as the first words addressed to him, were a command to hasten down and prepare to receive our Lord as his guest, we can hardly be justified in placing his conversion at this point of the narrative. Nor is it very natural to suppose, that he would utter so precipitately his confession of wrong-doing and determination to make restitution, as would be implied in affixing the time as above stated. Between this and the preceding verse some interval of time, therefore, must have elapsed, during which Jesus discoursed of things pertaining to the kingdom of God, including the duty and nature of repentance, the necessity of faith in the Son of God, and a life of holiness. The heart of this publican was opened of the Lord to receive the word. Now he speaks the language of a regenerated man. He has been touched and melted by the love of Jesus. The grace of God has wrought a change in his soul, and he evinces his conversion by *standing forth*, in the presence of the whole company, and professing his readiness to make all the restitution in his power for his ill-gotten gains. He at once begins to manifest the fruits of repentance, and to conform his outward conduct to the spiritual life within. *Said unto the Lord, &c.* Zaccheus addressed these words to Je-

sus, as the one at whose feet the offering was to be laid. The assembled guests were, however, witnesses of this avowal of his purpose to bestow his goods to charitable purposes, and to make amends for any dishonest act of which he may have been guilty. He began to act at once on the principle recognized in Matt. 25: 40, and evinced his love to Christ by remembering the wants of those who were poor and friendless. *The half of my goods, &c.* This was the spontaneous expression of his love, and not the result, as some strangely suppose, of some intimation from his publican acquaintances of the parable spoken by our Lord, and its application (16: 9). *I give.* The present tense is used to denote a fixed and permanent principle hereafter to regulate his whole life, and in conformity with which, every thing which he possessed was to be consecrated to the service of God and the good of his fellow-men. *If I have taken, &c.* A better rendering would be, *whatever I have taken*, the form of expression rendering the amount extorted by false accusation indefinite, but leaving no doubt as to his having amassed wealth in the way here mentioned. *False accusation* or general maladministration of his office. See N. on 3: 4. The word refers to the habit of spying out any dereliction against law, and giving information thereof to the civil authorities in order to receive a reward, or secure a bribe of secrecy from the party subject to the penalty of the law. It was this habit of spying out and making false representations of the circumstances and doings of others, by which a sort of black mail was levied, which made the publicans so odious in the estimation of the Jews. *Fourfold.* Doddridge remarks, that this was the general law of restitution, except in instances where special reasons existed for more abundant satisfaction. The Roman law,

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch 'as he also is 'a son of Abraham.

d Ro 4:11, 12, 16; Ga 3:7. e Ch. 13:16.

after judgment was obtained, required an oppressive publican to restore four-fold. This exceeded what was required in the Mosaic law, which was only the addition of one-fifth to the amount of which the person had been defrauded. See Numb. 5:7. Archbishop Tillotson (Works, vol. iii. p. 86) says, that "had more than an eighth part of Zaccheus's possessions been unjustly gotten, he could not have been able to make restitution, after having given away half of what he now had to the poor, even though he had stripped himself of all."

9. *Said unto him.* Our Lord in form addressed Zaccheus, but the words were concerning him, and intended as a testimony of his conversion to those who stood by. *Salvation* has here as in 1:77, its high spiritual sense of deliverance from sin and its consequences, and the bestowment of eternal life and blessedness in the kingdom of Christ. An indirect allusion may also have been made in the use of the term, to the name of Jesus (*Saviour*), who had been the guest of Zaccheus. "Salvation had come, for Jesus the Saviour has entered, and hence there is joy in the tabernacles of the righteous," Stier. *Come to this house* in the conversion and acceptance with Christ of Zaccheus its head. We have no reason to doubt that other members of the family shared in the spiritual blessings of this visit of our Lord, and that this instance of household consecration was not unlike that of Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened to receive the truth from the lips of Paul (Acts 16:14). The words *this house*, are slightly emphatic, its previous ill-repute from its avaricious and overreaching possessor, being remotely hinted at. *Is a son of Abraham.* This does not mean that he had become by repentance and faith in Christ, a spiritual son of Abraham, although this was also true. The idea is that, as he was a

10 For the son of man is / come to seek and to save that which was lost.

11 ¶ And as they heard these

/ Mat. 18:11; see Mat. 10:6; & 15:24.

lineal descendant of Abraham, which his name even denoted (see N. on v. 2), he had a right to the blessing of salvation contained in the promise made to Abraham, although he was so despised by those who had murmured that our Lord had condescended to be his guest. Our Lord publicly avers that he had not gone into the house of a Gentile, but of one who belonged to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (see N. on Matt. 15:24), and who was now not only a lineal, but a spiritual descendant of the father of believers.

10. This verse is subjoined as an additional reason, why it was meet that salvation should come to the house of Zaccheus. He was one of those lost ones of the natural descendants of Abraham, for whose salvation Jesus came into the world to suffer and die. The greater the depth of sin and misery into which they had fallen, the more urgent the demand made upon the love of Him who "came to seek and to save that which was lost." In the espial of Zaccheus upon the tree, and his turning aside from his immediate journey to become his guest, and to preach to him the gospel of salvation, there was additional force and pertinency in these words *to seek and to save.*

11. *As they heard these things.* There were many of the company of Jesus, who had been welcomed as guests with him to the house of Zaccheus. They had watched with deep and absorbing interest every incident which occurred, and listened intently to the words of Jesus. These persons, and the multitude without, were doubtless somewhat disappointed that the triumphal procession to Jerusalem should have suffered this interruption, and still more so to find Jesus wholly engrossed with themes so different from those, which in their estimation were appropriate to the high

things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they

thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

g Ac. 1: 6

Messianic office which they hoped he was now about to publicly assume. The parable of the Ten Pounds was therefore *added* to the discourse more appropriately having reference to Zaccheus, in order to disabuse the mind of his followers from their erroneous impressions, that there was to be an immediate appearance of the kingdom of God in the sense which they had attached to it. The parable was probably spoken in the room which opened into the court, where the people from the outside could also hear him. Some think that it was spoken in one of the rooms of the house, but we do not believe that Jesus confined his instructions, on this occasion, to the inmates of the house and his own immediate followers. The multitudes that were in attendance upon him on his way to Jerusalem, would not be easily kept at a distance, when they knew that he was conversing upon themes of such deep and thrilling interest.

*He added to the discourse previously held with Zaccheus.* The expression is equivalent to *he continued his discourse*. Webster and Wilkinson take it in the sense of *proceeded to speak*, after the Hebrew idiom. *Because he was nigh, &c.* The open and public manner in which he was making this journey to Jerusalem, and the announcement several times explicitly made by him, that on this visit to the city he would be exposed to the most deadly violence of his enemies, and even suffer death at their hands, led the multitude, whose views of the Messianic kingdom were very crude and erroneous, to suppose that he would make some remarkable manifestation of power by which his enemies would be overthrown, and his kingdom established at once on an immutable foundation. *Was nigh unto Jerusalem.* Jericho was about 20 miles E. of Jerusalem. On the rugged, dismal, and dangerous nature of this road, see N. on 10: 30. *And because they*

*thought, &c.* The circumstance of his near approach to the city, surrounded by so large a company of friends, gave occasion for the impression that he would openly proclaim himself the Messiah. There seems to have been a dignity and even majesty of bearing in the Lord Jesus, such as they had not previously witnessed (see Mark 10: 32, with Note). Every thing betokened the approach of great and stirring events. The sequel justified their anticipation of a grand finality in his ministry, yet in a way far different from what they had anticipated. *Should immediately appear*, i. e. should be publicly established and acknowledged. A temporal Messianic kingdom is of course here referred to. The spiritual kingdom was indeed to be set up on this visit to Jerusalem, but it was to be founded upon his sufferings and death. They were looking for some manifestation of divine power, by which his enemies, whom they knew to be gathered in force at Jerusalem and awaiting his arrival, would be subdued and humbled, and his Messiahship acknowledged by the whole nation.

12-27. This parable of the Ten Pounds is very similar to that of the ten talents, which he afterwards pronounced on the Mount of Olives, as recorded by Matthew 25: 14-30, on which see Notes. There have not been wanting expositors, who have gravely contended that these parables are one and the same. But not to speak of the connection in Luke, so definite, well marked, and clear, which it has with the visit at the house of Zaccheus, the parables differ in some of the most essential features, and have manifestly a distinct and individual object. The design of the parable of the ten talents in Matthew, was to illustrate and to enforce the duty of so improving our time, talents, and privileges, that we may be in a state of constant readiness to account therefor, whenever our Lord shall summon us to a reckoning.



12 <sup>1</sup>He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far

A Mat. 25: 14; Ma. 13: 34.

The parable of the ten pounds in Luke was designed to disabuse the multitude of the notion, that he was at this time to be publicly received and acknowledged by the Jews, as their long-expected Messiah. Another object of this parable was to warn his followers against defection from him, when they found themselves disappointed in their expectations of a temporal Messiah. His rejection by the Jews is set forth in v. 14, and their doom is sealed in v. 27. These two parables have therefore distinct uses, which if there were no other evidence of their being pronounced on different occasions, would sufficiently attest their distinct character, and render it quite certain that Luke was not indebted to Matthew for this parable. At the same time it must be allowed that the two parables have a close verbal resemblance, and that the textual explanation of the one will suffice for both.

12. *A certain nobleman*, &c. The framework of the parable is thought by some expositors, to have been derived from the visit of Archelaus to Rome, to be confirmed in the dominion left him by his father Herod the Great, in which he was opposed by an embassy of Jewish citizens, who requested that they might live in the enjoyment of their own laws and institutions under a Roman governor. But I very much question, whether our Lord had this political incident in view in the construction of the parable. Had the features of the parable been recognized, as belonging to an event of such importance to the nation as the one above referred to, the tendency would have been to draw away the mind of the people from the spiritual truth intended to be taught and enforced, to that which was comparatively unimportant, but which to them, in their present condition of excitement in regard to the kingdom which they supposed he was about to establish, would be of paramount interest, as furnishing some clue to the movements of their Lord, in regard to what

country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his ten serv-

lay in the immediate future. The word *nobleman*, is not then to be referred in the costume of the parable to Archelaus, or to Herod his father, who under the government of Antigonus went to Rome ostensibly to seek the kingdom for that prince, but really to secure it, as he did, for himself. The word is indefinitely used, that is, there is nothing in it, or the parable in which it stands, to give any clue as to what person our Lord had in mind. This was not essential to the parable, and is left wholly in the dark. There can be no doubt, however, of its reference in the interpretation of the parable to our Lord himself, setting forth his high birth as Son of God and King Eternal. (1 Tim. 1: 17). *Far country*. See N. Mat. 21: 33. *To receive for himself a kingdom*, i. e. to be confirmed in royal power and dignity. It is assumed that this prince went to a superior power to be secured in his rights. Kings and princes, in the time of the Roman empire, were continually resorting to this means of strengthening their government at home. This clause is peculiar to Luke's parable. *For himself*. By or as the reward of his own achievements. So our Lord, by his death and resurrection, laid the foundation of a kingdom which was his, and to be held by him for ever (Dan. 4: 8; Isa. 9: 7; Luke 1: 33). Trench thinks that as this nobleman returned a king over them, among whom at his departure he sustained the rank only of a nobleman, he went on this journey to solicit and receive the investiture of that kingdom, whereof before he was only one of the more illustrious citizens.

13. *He called* (i. e. summoned into his presence) *his ten servants*. The word *ten*, is here used of an indefinite number. The verity of the narration is preserved by referring to a particular number. *Ten pounds*. The same sum was committed to each man. In Matthew's parable of the talents, one had five, another, two, and another, one.

ants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14 'But his citizens hated him,

and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

† Jo. 1: 11.

Variety of gifts and opportunities of usefulness are there designated. Here the simple duty of being busy in the Master's service is illustrated and enforced, without any special reference to varied privileges or means of usefulness. The same general principle of Christian activity and fidelity lies however at the basis of both parables. As it regards the amount given to each man, it was smaller than the least sum given in Matthew, which was a *talent*. A *pound* was about \$15. It should however be remarked, that in Matthew the man's whole property was committed to his servants, while here they were tried by small sums being intrusted to them. The parable in Luke gathers force from this circumstance, as the weight of responsibility would naturally be far less on the reception of a trifling sum, than on that of a large amount of money. The trial of these servants was therefore more close and searching, than that of the servants in Matthew's parable. *Occupy*. This does not mean the simple possession or retention of the sum committed to them, for in that case no fault could have been found with the servant who bound up his pound in the napkin, and thus kept it in safety against his lord's return. It means *to trade, traffic, or do business with, to use to one's advantage*, and corresponds to the word *traded, did business in the way of trade*, in Matt. 26: 16. Hence the servant whose pound lay useless, was reprehended and punished. *Till I come*, i.e. all the time of my absence. They were immediately to set about the employment of this money to advantage, and not intermit their labors until he returned. In the application of the parable, this shows how constant is the service which God requires of his people, and how culpable will be their conduct, if they expend their labor and strength on things having no reference to their spiritual welfare.

14. This verse is parenthetical, and refers to the settled opposition of those who were adverse to the government of the prince, now on a visit to a higher potentate to be confirmed in his kingdom. They went so far as to send a counter embassy to prejudice the claim of the nobleman, by declaring their unwillingness to receive him as their sovereign. How applicable this was to the Jews, who rejected their Messianic King, is obvious to all. In the whole line of their history, which was that of a rebellious and stiff-necked people, in their persecution and rejection of God's messengers the prophets, and their subsequent rejection of the Messiah himself, their cry had gone up to heaven, "We will not have this man to reign over us." Those who base this parable on the visit of Archelaus to Rome, find the groundwork of this message, in the deputation of fifty persons sent by the Jews to Augustus to complain against Archelaus. In regard to the verb *hated*, the tense in the original refers it to a permanent, settled hatred, entertained towards the prince even before he set out on his journey. So the hatred to Christ was deep-seated in the Jewish nation, and increased in virulence, under every effort which divine love and forbearance put forth for its removal, until it reached its culminating point in the crucifixion of Him, who was their true and rightful Prince and Messiah. The word *citizens* in the parable was well chosen to represent the citizens of Jerusalem, who were the chief actors in the apprehension and crucifixion of Jesus. *Sent a message after him*. Trench refers this to an embassy sent by this faction to the court whither their prince had gone, to anticipate and counterwork him there, and to declare how unwelcome his exaltation would be. There is no doubt that *embassage* would be the better translation here, and that the words *this*

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might

know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17 And he said unto him,

*man* (contemptuously spoken, see N. on Matt. 26: 61), evinces the presence of the prince, when the embassy uttered their protest against his authority. It is worthy of note, that the terms of this message are similar to the declaration which twice fell from the lips of the Jews, "We have no king but Cesar," and, "Write not the king of the Jews." See John 19: 15, 21.

15. *Having received, &c.* He had been successful in the object of his journey, and now returned fully confirmed in his government. Thus Jesus was constituted King in Zion, at the time the decree went forth, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Compare Ps. 2: 6-12, where is the prophetic annunciation of the very enthronement set forth in this parable. *Then he commanded.* The original is *and he commanded*, which connects this act with his return, as one of immediate sequence. He lost no time in rewarding his faithful servants, and it is worthy of remark, that his love for them so far outweighs his displeasure with his enemies, that his vengeance is deferred, until he has praised and rewarded their fidelity. Such also is the order of rewards and punishments at the final judgment. See Matt. 25: 31-46. *That he might know how much every man had gained by trading; literally, that he might know who had gained by trading (and) what.* The inquiry here instituted was twofold, as to who of the servants had been diligently engaged in employing the money to advantage; and what such of them as had done so, had respectively gained by trading. Alford translates, *what business each had carried on.* But the kind of business was of minor importance, the thrift and enterprise of these servants, as evinced by their answer, constituting the main object of the inquiry. The verb *had*

*gained by trading*, is the same as the one rendered *occupy*, in v. 13, only that it is so compounded, as to convey the additional idea of a thorough completion of the service assigned them. The use of the word in even more emphatic form, showed with what strict responsibility these servants were to be held to the very letter of their instructions. The stern character for justice, evinced by this prince in all his acts, is referred to, but with a very contumacious spirit and in false terms of reproach, by the slothful servant in v. 21.

16. *Then came; literally, came forward* to the royal tribunal, where they were to render their account. *The first* who had been summoned into his lord's presence. The investigation is carried on with each one separately. The general good conduct of the servants taken as a body, cannot atone for the unfaithfulness of any individual of the number. Each must stand or fall on his own merits. *Thy pound hath gained.* Alford notices the humility with which these words are spoken, in comparison with the reply of the servant in Matthew, "behold I have gained beside them five talents more." The words *thy pound*, in which all ownership of the money is disclaimed by this faithful servant, is worthy of notice in estimating his character. The large increase upon his capital is also to be marked, and the reward of ten cities, in keeping with the regal power with which the prince had now been invested, and which enabled him to reward his faithful followers by making them rulers over the cities and towns of his kingdom. This method of reward was common among ancient kings and princes. The word translated *hath gained*, signifies literally, *has worked out*, as though it was the gift of his lord, which had increased itself tenfold, and

Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been <sup>a</sup> faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, say-

& Mat. 25 : 21; ch. 16 : 10.

not its wise and energetic management by himself. It would be difficult to find elsewhere an example of such a conjunction of modesty and true merit. Paul attained this grace to an eminent degree (see Gal. 2 : 20), and every believer in Christ must to a greater or less extent realize his own worthlessness, apart from the grace of christian diligence and activity given him by Jesus Christ. Drummond notices the unbounded power of expansion in the gift of God's grace in Christ, when really and faithfully received by his servants. "As far as the similitude teaches, there was no reason why the servant who gained *five* pounds might not have gained *ten*, nor why the other might not have gained *twenty*. The limitation, as it regards the productiveness of the gift of God's grace, does not spring from any thing in that gift itself, but from lack of faithfulness and unceasing diligence on the part of those who have it."

17. *Well*. A word of approval, brief, but comprehensive and final. His probation is now ended and his course is approved. Toil, labor, anxiety, suffering, watchfulness, have all ceased. Henceforth his existence is to be one of honor and enjoyment. *A very little*. The sum intrusted to him was comparatively small, but it served to test his industry and fidelity, and therefore was not permitted to limit his reward. Antithetic to this small sum of a single pound, was the governorship of ten cities, a trust both honorable and great, and for which the servant had shown his eminent qualifications. *Have thou authority*; literally, *know or be assured that you have authority*, i. e. are even now put in authority over ten cities. The structure of the original indicates the possession of this authority by the servant, before he was notified or aware of it. So at the last day, the righteous

ing, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound,

are to enter upon the inheritance of a kingdom, prepared for them from the foundation of the world. The heavenly inheritance, the final reward of obedience is not something contingent or doubtful, but is reserved in heaven for such as are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation (1 Pet. 1 : 3-5).

18. *Came*, a different verb from the one employed in v. 16, and signifying less intimacy and nearness of approach. *Thy pound hath gained*, &c. The same modest disclaimer of all personal merit is made use of here, as in the report of the servant who had gained ten pounds. It is to be noticed that the sum intrusted in this parable to the servants was the same, but their improvement of it different. The reward is therefore in each case proportionate to the increase on the principal committed to them. But in Matthew, the sums respectively intrusted to the servants varied, while the ratio of improvement was in each case the same. The reward was therefore the same. One great and harmonious truth underlies these parables, that rewards in the future state will be proportionate to the fidelity with which our service on earth has been performed; and that the measure of our reward will not depend upon the amount committed to our charge, but upon the faithful discharge of the duties devolving upon us from our opportunities and means of usefulness.

20. *Another*. Whether this was the only one who proved unfaithful, or whether there were others of the ten, who were chargeable with neglect of duty, we are not informed. He is the representative of a class, and in him we have the illustration of the doom, which awaits those who are slothful in their Lord's service. As the enemies referred to in v. 27, are the openly impeni-

which I have kept laid up in a napkin :

21 'For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man : thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22 And he saith unto him, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. "Thou

*Mat. 25 : 24. m 2 Sa. 1 : 16; Job 15 : 6; Mat. 12 : 37. n Ma. 25 : 26.*

tent, this unworthy servant must represent the professed followers of Christ who have no grace in their heart, but are hypocrites and deceived souls in the visible church on earth. Olshausen claims for him, and the parallel persons represented in Matthew by the five foolish virgins, and the unprofitable servant in the parable of the talents, the condition of such persons as have grace in their heart, but mixed with false views and remissness of duty. But this is contrary to the spirit and scope of all these parables, and the direct address, *wicked and slothful servant*, which shows, both in this and in the corresponding parable in Matthew, our Lord's estimate of his true character. *Laid up* for safe keeping. *Napkin*. This article was attached to the girdle, or upon the hand or left arm, and was frequently employed to enfold things which were to be carefully carried or kept. This wicked sluggard bound up the money in this napkin, and carried it about continually with him, to be assured of its safe keeping. Trench remarks, that this idle servant did not use the napkin or *sudarium* for its proper use, to remove the sweat and dust from his face, resulting from active labor (Gen. 3 : 19), and he therefore put it to the use here mentioned. In Matthew, the servant buried the treasure for safe keeping under the ground, either through his greater indolence, or because the sum was too large to carry about on his person.

21-24. The language of the parable is here very similar to the correspond-

ing portion of that in Matt. 25 : 24-28, and the reader is therefore referred to the full comments on that passage. *Austere*. Harsh, stern, unforgiving. The word is literally employed of that which is harsh and bitter to the taste. In Matthew, it is *hard*, literally, something *dried* or *shrivelled* up, so as to be harsh and rough to the touch. Both words have, therefore, the same signification in the parables. *Out of thine own mouth*, i. e. on the very principle of your excuse for unfaithfulness. *Thou wicked servant*. Better and more emphatic the original, *wicked servant* ! the pronoun being needlessly supplied in our version. See N. on Matt. 23 : 24. In Matthew, *wicked and slothful servant*. Allusion may have been had there to the fact that the servant buried his treasure, being too indolent to carry it about on his person for safe keeping. I would not, however, press this epithet *slothful*, to teach any excess of that quality in the servant who buried his treasure, over the one who carried it about with him. They were both guilty of the most culpable indolence, and justly condemned therefor. *Bank* or *counter* of the money-changers. The *exchangers* of Matthew, were the *bankers* or persons who sat at the counter or table to transact the necessary business. These persons not only exchanged money, but received it on deposit with interest, and hence, as I have remarked in my note on the parallel passage in Matthew, to have loaned the money to these men would have been far preferable to burying it in the earth,

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury ?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

ing portion of that in Matt. 25 : 24-28, and the reader is therefore referred to the full comments on that passage. *Austere*. Harsh, stern, unforgiving. The word is literally employed of that which is harsh and bitter to the taste. In Matthew, it is *hard*, literally, something *dried* or *shrivelled* up, so as to be harsh and rough to the touch. Both words have, therefore, the same signification in the parables. *Out of thine own mouth*, i. e. on the very principle of your excuse for unfaithfulness. *Thou wicked servant*. Better and more emphatic the original, *wicked servant* ! the pronoun being needlessly supplied in our version. See N. on Matt. 23 : 24. In Matthew, *wicked and slothful servant*. Allusion may have been had there to the fact that the servant buried his treasure, being too indolent to carry it about on his person for safe keeping. I would not, however, press this epithet *slothful*, to teach any excess of that quality in the servant who buried his treasure, over the one who carried it about with him. They were both guilty of the most culpable indolence, and justly condemned therefor. *Bank* or *counter* of the money-changers. The *exchangers* of Matthew, were the *bankers* or persons who sat at the counter or table to transact the necessary business. These persons not only exchanged money, but received it on deposit with interest, and hence, as I have remarked in my note on the parallel passage in Matthew, to have loaned the money to these men would have been far preferable to burying it in the earth,

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

o Mat. 18 : 12; & 25 : 29; Ma. 4 : 25; ch. 8 : 18.

or carrying it idly about in a napkin. The owner could then have obtained the lawful interest (*mine own with usury*, v. 23) of his money, which would have been better than to have it lie entirely useless. The verb rendered, *might have required*, literally signifies *might have done*, in the sense of *exact, claim*, as the payment of interest, fines, taxes, and any thing which is legally due. See N. on 3 : 13, where the same verb is employed in the sense of *to extort*, under pretence of legal collection of money. *Them that stood by*, i. e. the officers in attendance. See N. on Matt. 25 : 28.

25. *And they said, &c.* This parenthetic expression is not that of the persons to whom Jesus spake the parable, but of those in the parable who stood by, when the king was reckoning with his servants. To these same courtiers, who expressed their surprise that the money should have been bestowed upon one already so richly rewarded, the words in v. 26 are addressed. In this parable all that is represented as being done to the wicked servant, was to deprive him of the money originally committed to him. It cannot be doubted, however, that he was included in the number of the king's enemies (v. 27), and doomed with them to undergo capital punishment. Matthew's *cast ye the unprofitable servant, &c.*, would of itself justify such a conclusion. His whole demeanor, both in neglecting his duty during his lord's absence, and his false and impudent charge in v. 21,

28 ¶ And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

29 And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount of Olives*, he sent two of his disciples,

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against *you*; in the which at your entering ye shall

p Ma. 10 : 32.  
q Mat. 21 : 1; Ma. 11 : 1.

showed that he belonged in heart, at least, to that wicked faction which sent the insulting message in v. 14.

27. This verse answers to v. 30 in Matthew's parable. It can hardly be questioned, that the destruction of Jerusalem is here primarily intended, but it would deprive the passage of its principal force, to limit it to the temporal punishment of Christ's enemies. The language has a more extensive signification, and includes the final overthrow and punishment of all the enemies of truth in the world to come. See 1 Cor. 15 : 24-58.

28. Our Lord now resumes his journey towards Jerusalem. *He went before*, i. e. he led the way with the holy fervor and zeal of one, who is hastening to the achievement of some great work. See N. on Mark 10 : 32. Our Lord did not falter in his purpose, although he well knew the awful nature of the sufferings which awaited him at Jerusalem. *Ascending*. The city of Jerusalem was geographically several thousand feet above the Jordan, on which was the Plain of Jericho. See N. on 10 : 30.

29-44. OUR LORD'S TRIUMPHANT ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM. *Bethany*. Jerusalem. See Ns. on Matt. 21 : 1-17; Mark 11 : 1-11. There is a close verbal resemblance between the Evangelists, in this remarkable portion of our Lord's history, yet with enough diversity of expression, to establish their respective claims to independent authorship. Between this triumphal en-

find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

try into the city, and the visit at the house of Zaccheus, the best harmonists unite in placing the visit at wethany. (John 12: 1, 9-11), where it is probable he spent the night. See N. on John 12: 1.

32. *And found even as he had said unto them.* This is omitted in the other Evangelists, although implied in their narration, especially in that of Mark. No one can well reject the evidence of our Lord's omniscience furnished in this incident.

33. *The owners*, i. e. persons belonging to the family of the owner. In Mark, "certain of them that stood there."

35. *They cast their garments.* The verb is expressive of hasty action, and shows their alacrity in preparing a seat for their Master upon the back of the animal. The pronoun *they*, is not to be limited to the two disciples who had gone for the colt. Others united in this pious act. *They set Jesus thereon*; more literally, *they assisted Jesus to mount thereon*. In Mark, *he sat thereon*, the previous act of mounting the colt being passed over.

36. *As he went, &c.* The spreading of their garments in the way, was not a premeditated but a spontaneous act arising from the occasion itself. The multitude, as they drew near the city, became animated with such enthusiasm, and inspired with such hopes of the im-

35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

36 'And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;

r 2 Kl. 9: 13; Mat. 21: 7; Ma. 11: 7; John 12: 14. s Mat. 21: 8.

mediate establishment of Christ's kingdom, that with one impulse they united in this public acknowledgment of the Messiahship of Jesus, and shouted forth their acclamations of joy and praise. So loud and imposing were these demonstrations of joy, that when he was come into Jerusalem, the whole city was moved to inquire who it was, whose coming into the city was attended with such public manifestations of joy (see Matt. 21: 19). As it respects the act of casting their garments in the way, it would seem from 2 Kings 9: 13, that it was a common ceremony before kings and princes. Webster and Wilkinson say that similar respect is shown in Hindostan to men of rank and strangers.

37. This verse is peculiar to Luke, and fixes definitely the place where the people burst forth into acclamations of praise. *At the descent* (literally, *close on to the descent*) *of the mount of Olives*, i. e. when he was about to descend the slope towards Jerusalem. This shows that it was when the city, in all its imposing splendor and beauty of situation (Ps. 48: 2), crowned with its magnificent temple, and embalmed in their purest and holiest associations by the memories of the past, became full in sight from the summit of Olivet, that the multitudes shouted forth their hosannas to the Son of David, whom they verily thought was now to erect his

38 Saying, 'Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: "peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

† Pa. 118: 26; ch. 13: 85.

throne in the city before them, and restore the nation to independence and power. *The whole multitude of the disciples* must be so interpreted as to include, what Matthew in a wider sense denominates "the multitude that went before and that followed." It is not unlikely that his disciples and more intimate friends, who formed the centre of the procession, and were in his more immediate attendance, first raised the triumphal shout, in which the procession before and behind joined. *Began to rejoice and praise God.* This translation is not quite faithful to the original, which is, *began, rejoicing, to praise God.* This makes their joy the moving cause of their ascriptions of praise. The *hosannas* were but the outward expression of emotions which they could no longer suppress. *With a loud voice* is added as a heightening circumstance. Their joy was so great that it could find vent only in the loudest acclamations. *For all the mighty works, &c.* Some of his wondrous works were doubtless recounted by them to one another, thus adding a new and fresh impulse to their notes of praise. Especially may we suppose that the raising of Lazarus from the dead, that most recent and wonderful of all his miracles, and which aroused his enemies to the most deadly resentment, formed no inconsiderable feature in the mighty works which they recounted to one another, as they mingled their hosannas in jubilant triumph.

38. *Blessed be the King, &c.* Their language had a depth of meaning, of which they had at this time but a faint conception. He was indeed a king, but his kingdom was not as they supposed of this world (John 18: 36). They were looking for a manifestation of his Messianic power, and probably had the most lively hope that the day of their thralldom to the Romans was at an end.

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

u Ch. 2: 14; Ep. 2: 14

But unutterable suffering and agony lay in the path of Him, whom they were conducting in triumph to the city. He was to wear a crown, but not until he had first been crowned with thorns. The sceptre of the universe was not the first to be put into his hand, but one of mock royalty. He was to be constituted King in Zion, but not until he had descended to the grave by a cruel and ignominious death. He knew all this. The thousands who were shouting around him were ignorant of it. Yet as Mary anointed him for the burial, without knowing the full significance of her pious act, so they rightly acclaim him King, although the time and manner of his enthronement was to be far different from what they were at this time expecting. *Peace in heaven.* Some take *heaven* in the sense of the whole moral universe, and refer these words to the final subjugation of the enemies of truth referred to in 1 Cor. 15: 24-28. But we can hardly suppose that the multitudes who uttered these words, had such enlightened and sublime views of the future glory and universal dominion of the Messiah. It is better therefore to refer it to the blessing of peace to be dispensed upon earth as the gift of heaven. See N. on 2: 14. The Messianic reign, after the overthrow of the enemies of God's chosen people, in the estimation of the Jews, was to be one of peace and prosperity. The whole earth was to be at rest, and unto Jerusalem as the metropolis of the world, were the nations to look for the administration of law and equity, and the adjustment of all international differences and causes of war.

39. The Pharisees, in greater or less numbers, seem always to have been on hand to watch his movements, and catch some word or expression, which they might make the ground of accusation. Here they take offence at the applica-



40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

41 ¶ And when he was come

as Hab. 2: 11.

tion to Jesus of prophetic words, which could be used only of the Messiah, which personage they denied him to be. In the same spirit of unbelief, the chief priests and scribes rebuked our Lord, after he came into the temple, for permitting the application to himself of such ascriptions of praise. See N. on Matt. 21: 15, 16. But who were these Pharisees, and how came they among the rejoicing multitude? Some expositors think that hypocritically disguising their real hatred and opposition, they had mingled in the company as his friends and followers, in order to report on their arrival at Jerusalem, any unguarded word or deed, which they had noted by the way, and which they might turn to his prejudice. Thrown off their guard by this triumphal entrance of Jesus into the city, and the enthusiastic shouts of the multitude, or deeming it no longer necessary to wear the mask of hypocrisy, they betrayed their true character and purpose, in this envious direction to rebuke the disciples. But this is so different from their usual open and undisguised opposition, that we cannot receive it as the true explanation of the presence of these persons. The probability is that they had attended him as representatives of their class all the way from Perea, and took no pains to conceal their hostility to him. If this does not satisfactorily account for their presence on this occasion, we may suppose them to have gone forth from the city at this time, to learn the cause of the demonstrations of joy, with which the great multitude were described descending the slope of Mount Olivet. But whoever these Pharisees may have been, whether they had mingled with the multitude, as his pretended friends, in order the better to spy out some ground of accusation, or were standing aside as spec-

near, he beheld the city, and 'wept over it,

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy

y John 11: 35.

tators of the scene, in a sort of holy horror at what they deemed such impious adoration, bade him rebuke his disciples. Our Lord replied by uttering what was probably a proverbial expression, to denote the impossibility of keeping out of sight or smothering a great truth which admits of no concealment. The sentiment is, that if his disciples held their peace on an occasion like this, it would betray such criminal indifference and stupidity, that the very stones beneath their feet and around them, would rebuke their coldness by acknowledging and proclaiming his kingly dignity. Some expositors find a reference here to Habak. 2: 11, but the resemblance is a chance and verbal one.

41. Amidst the acclamations of the multitude, our Lord slowly descends the slope of Olivet, and when the city in all its beauty, and magnificence, becomes fully exposed to his view, such a sense of its guilt and future ruin overwhelmed his spirit, that he began to weep tears of grief, intermingling words of pathos and tenderness, such as have never been equalled. When it is borne in mind, that our Lord experienced these sad emotions, in the very midst of the hosannas, which the multitude were shouting in honor of the "Son of David," we must conclude that it was the prospect of no common doom, which drew tears from the eyes of the Son of God, and caused him to utter such words of impassioned tenderness and grief.

42. *If thou hadst known.* A better translation, *would that thou hadst known.* This would avoid the necessity of the ellipsis, *it had been well with thee*, and besides is far more impassioned, being suited to the deep anguish of the Redeemer's heart, which found its appropriate utterance in *Oh that thou hadst known.* The pronoun *thou* is not repeated in the original, as

peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies

it is in our English version, and to the injury of the exact sense. The idea is simply this, *if thou also* (as well as these multitudes who are now openly acknowledging my Messiahship) *hadst known*, &c. The contrast between the unbelief which threw its dark pall over the city, and the simple faith of those in his train, appears to have been brought by the circumstances of his public entry, very vividly before his mind, and given shape to his ejaculations of sorrow. *At least* restricts the blame of their guilt in full degree to the present time. They had rejected God's messengers, the prophets, in former times. From the time of their departure from Egypt, they had been a stiff-necked and rebellious people. But in his gracious tenderness, our Lord overlooks as it were the past, "If thou hadst known, *at least in this thy day*." The words *in this thy day* refer to the *time of thy visitation*, spoken of in v. 44, the time when God especially visited them in mercy by the manifestation of his Son, as the Messiah long promised and earnestly expected, by all such as were waiting for the Consolation of Israel. *The things which belong to thy peace*, i. e. are conducive to thy peace, perpetuity, and prosperity. The original is highly condensed, the words *things which belong* being very properly supplied in our English translation. The sense, but not the beauty and tenderness of the original, is transferred to our language. *Peace* has its highest reference to spiritual tranquillity and prosperity, not excluding, however, the idea of temporal peace and happiness, which were lost by the Jews in their refusal to acknowledge the Messiah. *Are hid* by a voluntary rejection of the evidence, which our Saviour gave of his divine mission. What is called in theological language judicial blindness, or the being left of God to unbelief and impenitence,

shall 'cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

• *Is. 29 : 8, 4; Je. 6 : 8, 6; ch. 21 : 20.*

is always preceded by a voluntary shutting of the eye to the claims of truth, and a wilful perversion of God's merciful provision for the recovery of the soul from sin and death. Our Lord well knew that the city was thus doomed of God, by its voluntary rejection of Him as their Messiah. The fearful catastrophe which was rapidly drawing nigh, and which was the precursor of more dreadful judgments in the world to come, awoke in his soul the most poignant and irrepressible grief.

43. This verse contains the reason why Jesus wished so earnestly that Jerusalem had known the things which pertained to its peace. It is a brief epitome of those calamities and horrors predicted more fully in Matt. 24. It is not correct to refer it, as some do, to the things hidden from their eyes in the sense of *namely that the days shall come*. The plural *days* are placed by some in emphatic contrast with the words *this thy day*, in v. 42. But it is better to refer them to the designation of time in general, the instances of which use of the expression are common in the Old and New Testaments. *Upon thee*. The preposition in the original communicates the idea of the burden of evil, which those days would bring upon the city. *Thine enemies*. The Romans. *A trench*, i. e. a rampart or mound. The word literally signifies a *pointed stake*, and then a *place palled in* or *palisaded*. The ancient mound raised against cities was constructed of earth thrown up, and set with sharp stakes or palisades. The excavation made by the earth thus removed, was called the *trench*, and was on the side of the rampart next to the city. Josephus (Bel. Jud. v. 6 § 2) says that Titus, in order to press the siege more vigorously, gave orders to his soldiers to fire the suburbs, and ordered that they should bring timber together and raise banks against the

44 And 'shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and 'they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; 'because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

45 'And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them

*a* 1 Ki. 9: 7, 8; *ML* 3: 12. *b* Mat. 24: 2; *Ma.* 18: 2; *ch.* 21: 6. *c* *Da.* 9: 24; *ch.* 1: 68, 78; 1 *Pe.* 2: 12. *d* *Mat.* 21: 12; *Ma.* 11: 11, 15; *John* 2: 14, 15.

city, which was as soon as possible carried into execution. *Compass thee round* as besiegers a city. In the fifth year of the war, the city was entirely shut in by the Romans. This is referred to in the next clause, *keep thee in on every side*, i. e. so enclose the city that none could leave it without falling into the hands of the besiegers.

44. *Shall lay thee even with the ground.* See N. on Matt. 24: 2, where this prediction is repeated. The translation would better answer to the force of the verb, if it were *shall dash thee level with the ground*, the metaphor being taken from an edifice, violently thrown down in a heap of promiscuous ruin. *Thy children within thee* belongs to the same verb in the varied sense *shall destroy, put to death thy children*, &c. The idea is that both the city and people would be given to utter destruction. *Because thou knewest not*, &c. This was the great and crowning reason why the city was given up to be destroyed. It had been insensible of the presence of Him who alone had power to avert this ruin. By the rejection of Him, they had put the crowning act to their long series of rebellions, and had filled the measure of their iniquities. The word *visitation* is here employed in a good sense of a visitation of mercy and love. See Gen. 21: 1; Ruth 1: 6; Luke 1: 68, 78; 7: 16. Sometimes, however, it is used of a visitation to inflict evil. See Job 35: 15; Isa. 29: 6; Ex. 20: 5.

45-48. THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE. *Jerusalem.* Third day of the week. See Ns. on Matt. 21: 12, 13; Mark 11:

that sold therein, and them that bought;

46 Saying unto them, 'It is written, My house is the house of prayer; but 'ye have made it a den of thieves.

47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the 'chief priests and the scribes and the chief of

*e* *Isa.* 56: 7. *f* *Je.* 7: 11.  
*g* *Ma.* 11: 18; *John* 7: 19; & 8: 37.

15-19. The narration of this incident in Mark is the most full and particular, that of Matthew, the least so. This cleansing of the temple, according to Mark's order of events, took place the day after his triumphal entrance into the city. This should be kept in mind, in order to a clear and connected view of the events which crowded this week of our Lord's passion.

46. *Is the house of prayer.* In Matthew and Mark, *shall be called the house of prayer.* Luke speaks of the reality of the thing; the other evangelists, of its being thus called.

47. *He taught*; literally, *was teaching.* *Daily*, i. e. from the time of his public entrance, until the night of his apprehension. This was his heavenly work. Up to the last hour of his public ministry, he was assiduously employed in teaching the people, confirming his disciples, confounding his enemies, and laying deep and firm the foundation upon which his church was to be reared. *But the chief priests*, &c. What a contrast to our Lord's mission of peace and labors of love. While he was expending the few hours yet allotted to him on earth, in acts of benevolence and love, these wicked men were plotting how they might destroy him. They were not the low rabble who were engaged in this diabolical purpose, but the religious leaders and members of the highest judicatory of the nation, *the chief priests and scribes, and the chief of the people.* The verb *sought* should be translated *were seeking*, denoting their unremitted efforts to accomplish their plans.

the people sought to destroy him,

48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

### CHAPTER XX.

AND \*it came to pass, *that* on one of those days, as he

48. *Could not find, &c.* Literally, *could not find the (way) in which they might do it.* The next clause furnishes the reason for this. *All the people, &c.* The chief men of the nation were combined and arrayed against him in deadly hostility, but the people were very attentive; literally, *hung upon*, as when one drinks in all that another says. The additional idea of astonishment at his doctrine is noted in Mark. Doubtless the words of our Lord in these his last days, were of peculiar depth, tenderness and solemnity. The themes were the spirituality of God's law, the necessity of faith and repentance as a prerequisite to the blessings of the Messianic dispensation, and solemn warnings against the formality and hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Allusions to his own approaching sufferings and death, were doubtless made, which were so opposed to their views of a conquering, triumphant Messiah, as to excite their highest wonder, and give rise to discussions among themselves as to what the Great Teacher meant. Thus in his daily teachings, he was drawing his earthly ministry to a close, and preparing the minds of his followers for the awful scene which was approaching.

### CHAPTER XX.

1-8. OUR LORD'S AUTHORITY QUESTIONED. *Jerusalem.* Fourth Day of the Week. See *Ns.* on Matt. 21: 23-27; Mark 11: 27-33. The evangelists report this incident almost in the same words.

1. *One of those days* of his being in Jerusalem referred to in 19-47. *As he taught*; literally, *was teaching.* In Mark, *as he was walking.* In ancient

taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, \*by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

a Mat. 21: 23. b Ac. 4: 7; & 7: 27.

times instruction was frequently imparted, while the teacher was walking with his disciples. Perhaps, however, the expression in Mark has no other meaning, than that he was passing from one court of the temple to another, as he might find it necessary or convenient for the instruction of the people. *Came upon him.* The verb denotes a sudden, unexpected approach. It was the evident intention of these enemies of our Lord to overawe him by their presence, and to render it more effectual, they came suddenly upon him, and in great numbers, demanding his authority for assuming the office and functions of a public religious teacher. Webster and Wilkinson think that the word does not necessarily imply hostile intent. It certainly does, however, in the connection in which it here stands. There is the idea of arrest and interruption, as a criminal is apprehended in the very midst of his illegal doings. This rude and malicious assault was two days after the incident noticed in Matt. 21: 15, 16.

2. *Tell us.* Declare plainly to us. Let there be no further concealment. The insinuation is intentionally conveyed, that he concealed the warrant on which he pretended to act as a religious teacher, because he knew its defective character. They demand now its production. *By what authority.* They had rejected the evidence furnished by his miraculous power, even though it embraced the stupendous miracle of the raising of Lazarus from the dead. They now ask for the authority under which he acted. What higher or more satisfactory evidence could be given them, than what he had

8 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say,

already done? No proofs of his divine mission would have sufficed to remove their unbelief, so deeply seated and malignant had it become. Had the heavens been rent asunder, and the same voice, which attested to the divine Sonship of Jesus on the banks of Jordan, and on the Mount of Transfiguration, been heard by these wicked men, they would have been as unyielding and desperate in their opposition as before. So Sier: "They now again ask for proof in the face of a three years' exhibition of proof; after three years' telling and testifying, he is now again to tell them!" *Who is he who gave* is a little more full and emphatic, than *who gave you* in Matthew and Mark. There is more of rancorous hatred in the words, as recorded by Luke. *Who is he?* Declare who it is that would commission such a man as *you*, to act as a religious teacher? The very shape of the question carries with it their contempt of his claim to be a messenger sent of God.

3. *Answer me*; literally, *tell me*, responding to the *tell us*, in v. 2. There is a dignity and authority in this reply, which shows that they had failed in their attempt to overawe or silence him.

4. *Was it from heaven, &c.* This is virtually asking them by what authority John assumed the office of a public teacher. The question therefore reports upon his opponents the inquiry, which they had made in regard to the source of his authority. John was our Lord's forerunner, and it was the duty of the Pharisees and priests to have formed some definite opinion in regard to the source and nature of his mission, before they could consistently press Jesus to declare by what authority he acted. Had they studied in the light

From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: 'for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

• c Mat. 14: 5; & 21: 26; ch. 7: 29.

of prophecy the true character of John, and listened to the open and explicit testimony he bore to the Messiahship of Jesus, they would not have been at this late period of our Lord's ministry groping in the dark, as to his true character, and plying him with questions rendered so useless, by the abundant light which had been shed upon the subject from the very commencement of his public ministry. The inquiry therefore which Jesus put to these men, was something more than a mere resort to a counter dialectic stratagem, to entangle them and render them dumb in the presence of the people. It was a reference to the abundant testimony which John, whom their consciences acknowledged as divinely commissioned, had given in regard to the true mission of Jesus. They indeed overlooked every consideration, except what was immediately connected with their standing with the people, but this rendered the point of our Lord's inquiry not the less searching and significant.

5. *If we shall say, From heaven, &c.* Of John's divine mission they could have no doubt, and it was to avoid the inquiry, which they knew their sagacious opponent would put upon their avowal of this belief, 'why then believed ye him not when he spake of Me?' that they were driven to consider the probable consequences of denying that John was a messenger sent of God.

6. Still more direful would be the result, did they have the effrontery to pronounce John an impostor, in the hearing of the multitude. They had often encouraged the people in acts of violence. They had taught them the efficacy of mob violence, when argument and reason failed them. A resort to this short method of ridding themselves of a troublesome person, charac-

7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 ¶ Then began he to speak to the people this parable; <sup>a</sup> A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.

12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may

<sup>d</sup> Mat. 21: 33; Ma. 13: 1.

be they will reverence him when they see him.

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, 'The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?'

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

19 ¶ And the chief priests and

<sup>e</sup> Pa. 118: 22; Mat. 21: 42.

<sup>f</sup> Da. 2: 34, 35; Mat. 21: 44.

terized their treatment of Jesus, and subsequently, of Stephen (Acts 7: 54-60), and at a still later period, of Paul (Acts 21: 27-36). But now they themselves fear the violence of the people, if they deny to John, whom the whole nation revered as a holy man, the claim of being a teacher sent from God. Here then is their dilemma. On the one hand, the acknowledgment of John's claims would be followed by that dreaded question, 'Why did ye not believe his testimony of Me?' and on the other, the rejection of his claim as a divinely sent messenger, would be attended with extreme personal peril from the enraged multitude. They therefore prudently, but falsely, deny their ability to respond to his question. Of course they could have no further claim upon Jesus for

his reply to their question. If they rejected John they would reject him; if they would not believe John's testimony in his favor (John 1: 15, 29-36; 5: 33-36), they would not believe that which he should offer for himself. Hence it was idle to proffer to such men any further evidence of his Messiahship, so perverse were they and obstinately bent on his destruction.

9-19. PARABLE OF THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN. *Jerusalem.* Fourth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 21: 33-46; Mark 12: 1-12. A comparison with the other Evangelists will show that Luke has all the essential features of the parable, but has less particularity, especially in his description of the vineyard. The length of time, in which the lord of the vineyard was absent, is referred

the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

20 ' And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him

*g* Mat. 23: 15.

to alone by Luke, in the words *for a long time* (v. 9). The words *God forbid*, in v. 16, are commented upon in N. on Matt. 21: 41. The words *and they feared the people* (v. 16), are not adversative in the sense of *but they feared*, but denote the state of apprehension and alarm with which they sought to lay hands upon him, and which restrained them from those bold, open measures, which they would otherwise have adopted to rid themselves of him. In this way Luke fully harmonizes with Matthew. The translation *but feared the people*, in Mark 12: 12, is literally and more correctly *and feared the people*, his language being in the original precisely like that of Luke, only that he employs a word denoting a *crowd* or *throng* of people, where Luke uses the word *people*. There is a beautiful and consistent harmony therefore between the three Evangelists, in regard to this verse, which has been by some expositors denied.

20-26. INSIDIOUS QUESTION OF THE PHARISEES RESPECTING TRIBUTE TO CESAR. *Jerusalem*. Fourth Day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 22: 15-22; Mark 12: 13-17.

20. *Watched him*; better and more literally, *having watched* their opportunity. The question which they were about to propose had been framed with great craftiness, and much was expected from the open collision with the civil authorities, or the arousing of Jewish prejudice, to which our Lord's answer would subject him. They abide their opportunity, therefore, to propose it to him when his reply would be heard both by those

unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked him, saying, ' Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of *any*, but teachest the way of God truly:

22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cesar, or no?

*A* Mat. 23: 16; *Ma*. 12: 14.

who were in the Roman interest, and by those who denied the lawfulness of exacting tribute from God's chosen people. Hence they felt assured that whatever might be his answer, it would involve him in difficulties, which they might turn to his certain ruin or disgrace. *Which should feign, &c.* This is peculiar to Luke, and brings out a remarkable feature in this insidious effort to ensnare our Lord. They send to him as spies, men who hypocritically pretend to be strict observers of the law, and candid inquirers after truth. They are very anxious to obtain light on a dark and difficult question of casuistry. They come to him as one from whose well-known and fearless candor, integrity, and uprightness, they may expect a satisfactory solution of their difficulty. They acknowledge him as *Master*, attest to the truth of his doctrines, profess their conviction that he accommodates the truth to no man's special interest or condition; in a word, they declare their full belief that he teaches the true doctrine and way of God. Thus approaching him, these sly hypocrites endeavor to throw him off his guard, for the furtherance of their malignant and bloody plans. *They might take hold, &c.*, refers to the chief priests and not to the spies, who were only their tools and agents. *Of his words*. Alford renders, *that they might lay hold of him by some saying*. See Mark 12: 13. *Power* refers generically to the Roman power, of which the *authority of the governor* is added as the species. The repetition of the article in the original, shows that they are to be taken separately.

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

24 Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cesar's.

25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar the things which be Cesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

27 ¶ Then came to him cer-

† Mat. 22 : 23; Ma. 12 : 18.

22. The question which they propose is sufficiently direct in Luke, but not quite so categorically put as in Mark, where the words *shall we give or shall we not give*, are intended to render it impossible for Jesus, if he wished, to evade a direct reply to their question. In Matthew the question is preceded by the formal and general interrogation, *what thinkest thou*, in which the pronoun is emphatic, in the sense, 'others have given their opinion; now we would fain know what *you* think, in regard to this matter of difference and dispute.'

23. See Na. on Matt. 22 : 18; Mark 12 : 15. Our Lord showed that he well understood the true character and crafty purpose of these men. *Why tempt ye me?* Why do you propose such questions with crafty and hypocritical intent?

24. *Show me a penny.* In Matthew, *the tribute-money*. The coin in which the tribute was paid, was the Roman *denarius*, of the value of about fifteen cents. *Whose image, &c.* Luke passes over what is stated in Matthew and Mark, that they bring him at his direction one of these pieces of money. The idea in Luke is, that it was so instantly done, that there was no interruption whatever, in the conversation.

25. *Render therefore unto Cesar, &c.* See N. on Matt. 22 : 21.

26. *And they could not take hold, &c.* This refers back to v. 20, where the in-

tain of the Sadducees, 'which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked him,

28 Saying, Master, 'Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her;

‡ Ac. 23 : 6, 8. / De. 25 : 5.

tent with which they came to Jesus, is declared to be that they might take hold of his words. Luke closes his account of the incident, by referring to their ill success in the object and design of their mission. *They marvelled at his answer, &c.* The astonishment with which they received his reply, is referred to by all three of the Evangelists. The dilemma in which the question was so framed as to place him, rendered it almost a matter of certainty with them, that he could not extricate himself from the toils spread so artfully for him. But when they listened to his prompt, clear, and irrefutable reply, even these wicked and designing men could not withhold their wonder and astonishment. *They held their peace.* They had no reply to make. Had they attempted to refute by argument his positions, they well knew that defeat and the exposure of their weakness to the common people, would follow. According to Matthew, *they went their way*, that is, returned to the chief priests and scribes who had sent them on this vile errand.

27-40. INSIDIOUS QUESTION OF THE SADDUCEES ON THE RESURRECTION. Jerusalem. Fourth day of the Week. See Na. on Matt. 22 : 23-33; Mark 12 : 18-27. The verbal narration in Luke is almost the same as that of Matthew and Mark, until v. 34, where an impor-



and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

33 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this

world marry, and are given in marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

36 Neither can they die any more: for "they are equal unto

as 1 Co. 15: 42, 49, 52; 1 Jo. 3: 2.

tant particular respecting the law and design of marriage is introduced. In this world the perpetuation of the race demands the ordinance of marriage, but in the future world, where they die no more, but are like the angels of God, the necessity of marriage no longer exists, and the ordinance therefore is not known. From this Olshausen deduces, that the spiritual body will be so modified, that the difference of sex will not again appear in those who are raised from the dead. But this he supposes can be affirmed only of their physical character, there being no ground to suppose that their psychical nature will be abolished, at the resurrection. Olshausen also conjectures, that in those who are raised from the dead, there may be such a union of the sexes, as existed before the formation of the woman (Gen. 2: 21).

35. *They which shall be accounted worthy, &c.* Reference is had here not to the abstract idea of immortality beyond the grave, but to the condition and blessedness of the righteous in the future state. Exemption from the necessity and law of marriage, by a parity of reasoning, is applicable also to the wicked beyond the grave. But here as elsewhere, the righteous are spoken of, as if they were the only class which shared in the resurrection; that of the wicked not being regarded as one in its highest, truest sense, but only a resurrection to an existence of unmitigated suffering. In the expression *shall be accounted worthy*, all idea of personal worthiness on the part of believers must be totally excluded. Their only ground of acceptance with God is that

which results from faith in Jesus Christ, by which His righteousness so becomes theirs, that they are justified through His grace in the sight of a holy God. The words *that world* (i. e. the future age or dispensation), are opposed to *this world*, in v. 34. The one refers to that which is fleeting and transitory; the other, to that which is permanent and abiding. See N. on Matt. 12: 32. *Resurrection from the dead*, called in Rev. 20: 6, *the first resurrection*. As Christ is "the resurrection and the life" (John 11: 25), the event of the resurrection is regarded in this place as a blessing attained through worthiness of the creature, not personal and independent, but resulting from faith in Christ. To such the resurrection of the body and its reunion with the soul, not now, as on earth, a clog to its spiritual advancement and growth, but giving enlargement and zest to all its enjoyments and attainments, is justly regarded as an infinite blessing. Far otherwise is it with those, who arise from their graves to "the resurrection of damnation" (John 5: 29). In a resurrection made ineffably glorious by the death and resurrection of Christ, they do not at all participate. The naked, cheerless reality of the union of soul and body in endless suffering, is all that remains to them of a resurrection so glorious and blessed in the inheritance of the righteous.

36. *Neither can they die any more*, and hence the necessity of marriage to perpetuate the race no longer exists. The death referred to here is that which is physical. There is, besides, a spiritual death, which shall forever be the

the angels; and are the children of God, "being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, \* even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

n Ro. 8: 23. o Ex. 3: 6.

portion of the wicked, but from which the righteous will be wholly exempt. *Equal unto the angels* in the immortality of their being. For further remarks on this point, see N. on Matt. 22: 30. Equality of power and intelligence is not here taught, nor is there any clue from this passage, as to the physical condition of the sexes, or whether such a distinction will exist in heaven. That is a subject which has not been revealed, and all speculation thereupon must be useless and futile. *The children of God*, not here in the sense of adoption through faith in Christ, but as partakers of the divine nature, so that they cannot die. The reason is given in the next clause, *being* (i. e. because they are) *the children of the resurrection*. They have attained to the resurrection of life, which Jesus declared himself to be, having brought immortality to light through the gospel (2 Tim. 1: 10). They are members of the body of Christ, and because he lives they shall live also (John 14: 19). The form of expression, *children of the resurrection*, is Hebraistic, denoting *partakers in the resurrection*.

37. Having explained the nature and fruits of the resurrection, as introducing to a life of immortality, which needs not the ordinance of marriage to perpetuate the species, our Lord turns more directly to the proof of this doctrine from the Old Testament Scriptures. *Are raised*. The present in a general and universal sense for the future. "Our Lord speaks of them as being now, and all along, in the resurrection state; implying their present consciousness, and probably also their independence of time." Webster and

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for \* all live unto him.

39 Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.

40 And after that they durst not ask him any *question at all*.

p Ro. 6: 10, 11.

Wilkinson. *Even Moses*, i. e. that very Moses from whose marriage code you have drawn an inference against the resurrection of the dead. *Shewed*, i. e. indicated. It was not a positive declaration, but one which involved an assertion of the truth of the doctrine of the resurrection. *The God of Abraham, &c.* If Abraham and the patriarchs here mentioned were annihilated, the encouragement given to Moses in this declaration, would be baseless; and worse than that, it would be, as Stier says, a bitter irony on the part of God against Himself. "I who have not even delivered those also from death." The Sadducees were driven by this reference to God's own language to Moses, to abandon their position, or else charge God with using words of encouragement to Moses, which had no foundation in the real facts of the case. For, as our Lord himself says in v. 38, the words, if they imply any thing, show that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were still living, and that Jehovah was their God, and that in like manner He would vouchsafe his presence and blessing to Moses, and deliver him from the hand of those who would seek to destroy him.

38. *All live unto him*. In this general proposition is contained the great truth, that all those living on the earth, or who have already died, are in the sight of God alive. "In the regard of Him who inhabiteth Eternity, the being of *all* is a *living one*, in all its changes." Alford. In regard to the verbal annotations of this whole passage, the reader is referred to my Notes on the corresponding portion of Matthew.

39, 40. See N. on Matt. 22: 32 (end). It is evident from the applause with

41 And he said unto them, 'How say they that Christ is David's son?

42 And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?

45 'Then in the audience of all

g Mat. 23 : 43; Ma. 12 : 35. r Ps. 110 : 1;  
Ac. 2 : 34. e Mat. 23 : 1; Ma. 12 : 38.

which our Lord's answer to the Pharisees was greeted, that this sect fully believed in the resurrection of the dead, although it is somewhat remarkable that Josephus, who describes their tenets with great particularity, nowhere to my knowledge speaks of this article of their belief. That such however was their belief, there can be no doubt, and if any additional proof were needed to what may be here inferred, it would be found in Acts 23 : 8, where it is expressly said that while "the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit, the Pharisees confess (i. e. believe) both."

41-44. QUESTION RESPECTING CHRIST AND DAVID. *Jerusalem.* Fourth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 41-46; Mark 12 : 35-36. Between this and the preceding context, is to be placed the question of the lawyer, related in Matt. 22 : 30-40; Mark 12 : 28-34. That was the last of the questions proposed to him, although from Luke it would appear that the question of the resurrection was the last. There is no disagreement, inasmuch as Luke evidently refers to the vain and ensnaring questions with which they had insidiously pressed him, the last of which was the one proposed by the Sadducees. The lawyer who put the inquiry as to which was the greatest commandment, seems to have done it as a sincere inquirer after truth. See N. on Matt. 22 : 35.

the people he said unto his disciples,

46 'Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and "love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

47 "Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

t Mat. 23 : 5. w Ch. 11 : 43.  
o Mat. 23 : 14.

41. *Unto them*, i. e. the scribes referred to in v. 39. In Matthew he addresses the question to the Pharisees. These slight verbal differences show the independence of the writers. As to the real fact, there were doubtless both scribes and Pharisees standing by, to whom he addressed the question, *How say they?* i. e. what ground have they in saying? The pronoun *they*, as we learn from Mark, refers to the scribes. As authorized expounders of the law and the prophets, they made use of the expression *David's Son*, to designate the Messiah. Now our Lord proposes the inquiry, as to what was the ground of this appellation, and how it consisted with what David himself says of Christ.

42. *In the book of Psalms* (110 : 1). In Matthew, the corresponding word is *in spirit*; in Mark, *by the Holy Ghost*. An unanswerable argument is drawn from the words of Jesus, for the inspiration of the portion of the Old Testament here referred to. The word *spirit*, in our English version of Matthew, should have been written *Spirit*, as the absence of the article in the original is no proof that the reference is to David's own spirit, or spiritual condition, or state of ecstasy, when he called the Messiah his Lord.

45-47. WARNINGS AGAINST THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES. *Jerusalem.* Fourth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 23 : 14; Mark 12 : 38-40. *Then in the audience of all the people.* This is

## CHAPTER XXI.

AND he looked up, \* and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

2 And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, \* that this poor

a Ma. 12: 41. b 2 Co. 8: 12.

peculiar to Luke. Our Lord addressed his disciples, but in such loud tones as to be heard by all the people, who had gathered around him for instruction. There were doubtless Pharisees or their emissaries also within hearing, watching his words to find some ground of accusation.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1-4. THE WIDOW'S MITE. *Jerusalem.* Fourth day of the Week. See Na. on Mark 12: 41-44. Mark's account of this incident is the fullest, especially in vs. 42, 43, where we find that vs. 3, 4 of Luke were addressed to his disciples.

1. *He looked up.* The expression implies a pause in his discourse to the disciples, during which he raised his eyes, as persons do who look off at a distance, and saw the rich men depositing their offerings in the treasury of the temple. Mark is here more graphic and circumstantial. He represents our Lord as watching attentively for some time, the multitude as they approached and cast money into the treasury, among whom were many rich persons, who cast in much. Luke's form of expression is not such in the original, as to imply that it was the rich only who were at this time making these offerings, but simply that there were rich persons who were casting into the treasury their gifts. Thus the two accounts fully harmonize. *Rich men casting*; more literally, *the rich who were casting*.

4. *Unto the offerings* is equivalent to *into the treasury*, v. 1, implying the additional idea that these were offerings made to God. *Of her penury* is an ad-

widow hath cast in more than they all:

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

5 ¶ And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned

c Mat. 24: 1; Ma. 13: 1.

vance on Mark's of *her want*, in that it implies extreme destitution. So Mark's *all her living*, is in Luke *all the living that she had*.

5-19. DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE AND THE PERSECUTION OF THE DISCIPLES FORETOLD. *Jerusalem. Mount of Olives.* Fourth day of the Week. See Na. on Matt. 24: 1-14; Mark 13: 1-13. Verses 5, 6 were spoken as he was leaving the temple; the residue of the discourse was pronounced, as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, over against the city and temple. Between the eulogy of the widow, and his leaving the temple, we are to place what is related in John 12: 20-50.

5. *Some of his disciples.* See Matthew and Mark. *Gifts.* The ancients were accustomed to hang up in their temples all sorts of votive offerings, such as crowns, garlands, vases, tripods, arms, and the like, thus evincing their zeal and regard for the deity in whose honor the temple had been erected, and also administering to their natural vanity by this display of wealth. Temples were sometimes plundered for the sake of these treasures (see 1 Maccab. 6: 1-4), although so great and universal was the respect for their gods, that this was done by those only whose conduct evinced great and glaring impiety. Such an instance was found in the history of Antiochus the Great, who endeavored to compensate for the heavy fine of 18,000 Euboic talents to be paid by him to the Romans, by plundering a wealthy temple in the province of Elymais. The temple in Jerusalem, in accordance with this custom, was adorned with rich and beautiful gifts.

with goodly stones and gifts, he said,

6 *As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which 'there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*

7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?

d Ch. 19 : 44.

Some of these are particularly referred to in my Note on Matt. 24 : 1.

6. *As for these things which ye behold.* The original is very terse and striking, the pronoun being without any governing word, and constituting what grammarians call an *anacoluthon* or irregularity of construction. The disciples had directed his attention to the splendid gifts and adornments of the temple. He replies, *These which you see! The days will come* (see Note on 17 : 22) *in the which, &c.* This arrests at once the attention of the disciples and imparts emphasis to the reply.

7. *They asked him, &c.* What is here omitted in Luke, we learn from the other evangelists, that this discourse was delivered on the Mount of Olives, and that it was in reply to the inquiry of Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew. As it regards the scope and nature of the question proposed by them, the reader is referred to my Note on Matt. 24 : 3. It is hardly necessary to say that a clear apprehension of the scope and tenor of the prophecy depends, in no small degree, upon a correct view of the questions proposed, and hence they should be most carefully and thoroughly examined and understood.

8. *And the time draweth near, i. e.* the time of the Messianic kingdom. These are the words of the false Christs. We can hardly avoid comparing with these words of the Jewish false Christs, the almost similar language employed

8 And he said, 'Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ*; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.

e Mat. 24 : 4; Ma. 13 : 5; Ep. 5 : 6; 2 Th. 2 : 8.

by the impostors and deluded persons, who have in our day, at different times, filled the whole land with their predictions of an immediate end of the world, and we may lay deeply to heart the injunction of our Lord in reference to such, *go ye not therefore after them.* Become not their followers. Countenance not their unholy assemblies even by your presence. The word *therefore*, refers to the pretensions of these deceivers.

9. *But.* It would be better to translate this conjunction *and*, as in the same connection it is translated in Matthew and Mark. *Commotions*, i. e. insurrections and rebellions against the Romans. This word is peculiar to Luke, being put in the place of *rumors of wars*, in Matthew and Mark. In like manner, Luke has the stronger term, *be not terrified for be not troubled*, in the other Evangelists. *Must first come to pass*, i. e. take place, happen. Luke's *first* is a very important addition, and throws light on Matthew and Mark, where it is omitted. *The end* of the Jewish state, referred to by the disciples in the words *end of the world* (see Matt. 24 : 3). *By and by*, i. e. immediately. This is varied from Matthew and Mark's *not yet*. Much light is thrown upon this great prophecy by a comparison of the Evangelists. It will be seen that thus far Luke has been more precise and definite in his language, than either Matthew or Mark, whose terms are mostly the very same.

10 'Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom :

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences ; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 'But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues, and <sup>a</sup>into prisons, <sup>b</sup>being brought before kings and rulers <sup>c</sup>for my name's sake.

<sup>f</sup> Mat. 24 : 7. <sup>g</sup> Ma. 13 : 9; Re. 2 : 10.  
<sup>h</sup> Ac. 4 : 8; & 5 : 18; & 12 : 4; & 16 : 24.  
<sup>i</sup> Ac. 25 : 23. <sup>k</sup> 1 Pe. 2 : 13.

10. Luke's *then said he unto them*, would indicate a pause at the close of the preceding annunciation, after which the subject was resumed. But Matthew and Mark make this verse an expanded expression of the preceding one, and we must not therefore disjoin the two even by the most inconsiderable pause.

11. *Fearful sights, &c.* These words are peculiar to Luke, but are referred to in an extended Note on Matt. 24 : 7. *From heaven* marks the quarter from whence these fearful sights and signs proceeded, with the additional idea of the greatness of the prodigies and supernatural appearances.

12-15. The parallel to this is found in Matt. 10 : 17-22, on which see Notes. In Mark 13 : 9, 11, the prophecy is found also, and in somewhat expanded form. In regard to the method of harmonizing these passages, see Note on Matt. 25 : 9. *Before all these events* and ominous sights. *They shall lay hands, &c.* This was fully verified in the history of the apostles. Most, if not all of them except John, suffered violent deaths from the hand of their enemies, before the Romans beleaguered Jerusalem.

13. *It shall turn, &c.* This is explained in Note on Matt. 10 : 18. Some of the best opportunities of preaching the gospel, and bearing testimony to

13 And <sup>a</sup>it shall turn to you for a testimony.

14 <sup>b</sup>"Settle *it* therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer :

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, <sup>c</sup>"which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

16 <sup>d</sup>"And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and <sup>e</sup>*some of you shall they cause to be put to death.*

<sup>f</sup> Phil. 1 : 28; 2 Th. 1 : 5. <sup>g</sup> Mat. 10 : 19; Ma. 13 : 11; ch. 12 : 11. <sup>h</sup> Ac. 6 : 10. <sup>i</sup> Mi. 7 : 6; Ma. 13 : 12. <sup>j</sup> Ac. 7 : 59; & 12 : 2.

the cause of Christ, were furnished in the trial and hearing of the apostles and early Christians, before such rulers and kings as Felix, Festus, Agrippa, the Areopagus at Athens, and the like.

14. *Settle it therefore in your hearts*, i. e. adopt it as a settled principle of action. *To meditate*; literally, *to practise beforehand*, i. e. to have some set speech or defence prepared beforehand, to repeat before the tribunal.

15. *Mouth and wisdom*, i. e. power of utterance, and arguments and thoughts adapted to the occasion. The expressions are designed to be comprehensive. What our Lord here promises himself to give, is declared in Mark (13 : 11), to be the gift of the Holy Ghost speaking in them. This was one of the offices of the Spirit, which Christ promised to send. See John 14 : 26; 16 : 13. *To gainsay*, i. e. to confute in words; *to resist* has the sense of *to withstand*. The truth would be so overwhelming and convincing, that all opposition to its progress would be ineffective.

16. Here the prophecy in Matthew, Mark, and Luke again runs on in a parallel line, sometimes expressed in almost the same terms, and at other times exhibiting slight verbal variations. The prediction in Matt. 10 : 21 (on which see Note), has a closer resemblance to this passage in Luke, than

17 And 'ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake.

18 'But there shall not a hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

20 'And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

q Mat. 10: 22. r Mat. 10: 30.

the corresponding passage in Matt. 24: 9, where, however, the sense admirably harmonizes with both Luke and Mark. *And ye*; literally, *and ye also*, i. e. persecutions are not only to be expected from strangers, but also from your most intimate friends and nearest relatives. Mark's language is here the fullest and strongest. What in Luke is *shall be betrayed*, is there, *shall betray to death*. The reader of ecclesiastical history needs not to be informed of the literal fulfilment of this awful prediction, in the strifes, dissensions, and deadly feuds, which sprang up between members of the same family, attended and marked by the most bitter persecution, and even death itself.

17. See N. on Matt. 24: 10; Mark 13: 13. *Of all*, viz., relatives, friends, acquaintances, as well as by those who might naturally be expected to be your enemies.

18. *But*; literally, *and* (notwithstanding this universal and deadly opposition) *a hair from your head shall not be lost*, a strong proverbial expression, indicating that life and happiness in the higher, truer sense would not be affected in the least by these temporal persecutions. The same idea is couched in Matthew and Mark under the language, "he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." That the salvation and deliverance here referred to is from spiritual evil, there can be no doubt; for in the verses immediately preceding, the death of the body is unequivocally predicted.

19. This verse is found only in Luke, but if we translate it more literally, *by*

21 Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

22 For these be the days of vengeance, that 'all things which are written may be fulfilled.

s Mat. 24: 15; Ma. 13: 14.  
t Da. 9: 26, 27; Zec. 11: 1.

*your constancy* (in duty under suffering) *ye shall possess* (i. e. preserve to everlasting life) *your souls*, it harmonizes in sense with the parallel passage in Matt. 24: 13; and Mark 13: 13 (end).

20, 21. *When ye shall see, &c.* The parallel passage in Matthew and Mark expresses the idea of the complete investment of the city by the "abomination of desolation standing in the most holy place." The same general idea of an array of the idolatrous ensigns of Rome against the devoted city, is referred to in both forms of expression. See Ns. on Matt. 24: 15; Mark 13: 14. *The desolation thereof*, i. e. the process of its desolation. *In the midst of it*, i. e. Jerusalem. *Countries*, i. e. the open country or fields round about the city. The translation *country districts*, would be well suited to the passage.

22. This verse is found only in Luke. The words *days of vengeance*, refer to the time of divine retribution for the sins of Jerusalem. See 2 Thess. 1: 8; 1 Pet. 2: 14. Compare also the retribution predicted in 11: 50, 51, as about to be required of the Jewish nation for the blood of the prophets which they had shed through the whole line of their history. Webster and Wilkinson cite Isaiah 34: 8; 61: 2; 63: 4, as teaching the same awful truth. *That all things, &c.* Reference is probably had to the prophecy of Daniel, quoted in express terms by Matthew and Mark. The prediction by Moses (Deut. 18: 15-68) of the fearful judgments which should fall upon the nation, if they forsook God, had also a most full and remarkable accomplishment in the de-

23 \* But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for

α Mat. 24: 19.

struction of Jerusalem, and the final dispersion of the Jews. Indeed one can hardly read the prediction of Moses, and compare it with the dispersion, wanderings, and oppressions of the Jews for 1800 years, and not be struck with the almost literal fulfilment in them, of the fearful doom pronounced upon them by their great lawgiver, in case they forsook God and walked not in the way of his commandments. The Jews at this time—scattered as they are amongst almost all the nations of the earth, and speaking different languages, yet so peculiar, so distinct, so well marked, that even by their external appearance they betray to the most casual observer their Hebrew origin, and still more so by their distinct habits domestic and religious—are a living and irrefutable proof of the inspiration of these great predictions of Moses and Christ, the one spoken to the people with the promised land of Canaan full in view, the other from Mount Olivet, in sight of the proud and rebellious city, which was the exemplification and embodiment of the evil doings against which Moses so faithfully warned the nation.

23. The former part of this verse is in exact verbal accordance with Matthew and Mark, on which see Note. The latter part is peculiar to Luke, although according in sentiment with v. 21 in Matthew, and v. 19 in Mark. The word rendered *distress*, is that which is produced by force, constraint, necessity, as its etymology in the original shows. Hence it is very naturally and expressively used here, to denote the anguish and suffering brought upon the people by the siege. *In the land of Judea*. Although the seat of war was eventually and finally transferred to the city of Jerusalem, yet the whole land had previously been overrun by the Roman soldiery, and suffered the most dreadful calamities. *Wrath* is

there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24 And they shall fall by the

put here for the judgments of God against the wicked Jews, the cause being put for the effect. The word rendered *wrath*, is expressive of open and excessive anger, such as results from some violent commotion of the mind, and seeks the punishment of the offender. It is *active wrath*, and hence is constructed here with a preposition signifying *upon*, as though this desolating, vindictive wrath lay in all its dreadful weight *upon* the Jewish people.

24. This verse is to be read in connection with Matt. 24: 21, 22, and Mark 13: 19, 20. Luke, however, carries the prediction onward, until the Jews having subverted the purposes for which they were scattered upon the face of the earth, were to be fully restored again to the divine favor (see Rom. 11: 25, 26). But what is meant by *the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled*? Doddridge and some others think that it means the time when the Gentiles shall be visited and punished. Such is Olshausen's view: "this fulfilment in relation to the Gentiles, is to be regarded as a judgment poured out upon them for the purpose of punishing and sifting them. The prophets of the Old Testament speak in a similar manner, respecting the nations whom the Lord used as scourges to his own people: for a time they kept the ascendancy, and then they themselves in turn were exposed to the righteous judgments of God and brought down to ruin. See Isa. 10: 5, 12, 15; Zech. 1: 14, 15; Dan. 9: 26, compared with 12: 11." Such also is Alford's view, "the tribulation (Matt. 24: 21) includes *the wrath upon this people*, which is yet being inflicted, and the treading down of Jerusalem by the Gentiles still going on, and immediately after that tribulation, which shall happen when the cup of Gentile iniquity is full, and when the gospel shall have been preached in all the world for a witness, and rejected by the Gentiles,



edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations : and Jerusalem shall be trodden

down of the Gentiles, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

α Da. 9 : 27 ; & 12 : 7 ; Ro. 11 : 25.

shall the coming of the Lord himself happen." But by what necessity from the context or the passage itself, are we compelled to adopt an interpretation of such dark and cheerless aspect? Why should the great *fulfilment-times* of the Gentiles be an era of wrath and destruction. This view is not in itself so desirable, that we should subject any passage of God's word to exegetical torture in order to obtain argument or proof for its support? Not to speak of the tenor of the Messianic prophecies, which teaches beyond the possibility of any mistake, that the Redeemer's reign on earth is to be one of ultimate triumph, and that there will be an era of peace and righteousness, when all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, shall own and acknowledge Him as their King and Almighty Saviour; there is one great text, which seems to me to bear directly upon the point in hand, and furnish valuable and indeed indispensable aid in its interpretation. I refer to Rom. 11 : 25, "I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery [i. e. what has been hitherto concealed, and is now well nigh incredible, that the Jews also shall be converted], lest ye should be wise in your own conceits [i. e. puffed up with national pride in view of your own high and apparently exclusive privileges], that blindness in part hath happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Here it is plainly predicted that the Jews shall remain in impenitence and unbelief, until *the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in*. What does this last clause signify? The word *fulness* does not necessarily or from its own invariable signification, mean a *completion* or *fulfilment*, although it frequently has this sense, as in its application to the completion of the law (Rom. 13 : 10), and to the *fulfilment* of time (Gal. 4 : 4; Eph. 1 : 10). But, as Prof. Stuart in his admirable commentary on the Romans abundantly shows, such a meaning would be an

incongruous one in the present instance. The filling up or completion of a legal code, or an epoch of time, is what we can well understand. But what sense can be made out of such a meaning, when applied to the words, *fulness of the Gentiles*? We could be understood if we should say, *the completion of the Gentile epoch*, but this is quite different from the form of expression, *completion of the Gentiles*. I can have no hesitancy, therefore, in taking it in the sense of which it is susceptible, *full measure, great abundance, great numbers*; and the idea then would be that the Jews would not be restored, until all these *great numbers*, which were to be gathered in from the Gentile world before the blindness of Israel would be removed, were converted to Christianity. The Jews had rejected Jesus Christ. But the promise of God was not thereby to be made void; Christ was not to be without the reward for which he endured such travail of soul. The Gentile world would receive and acknowledge him as their Saviour. When the large numbers embraced in the covenant of God, should be gathered in from the Gentiles, when the inheritance of the riches of the gospel should be taken possession of by them for whom it was in the counsels of God provided, then should the Jews be restored to God's favor, and believe in Him whom they had so long rejected.

But when this event takes place, and the Jews are fully restored to the blessings and privileges which they had so long forfeited through unbelief, what then is to be the condition of the Gentile world? Is the era to follow to be one of mercy to them, or of wrath, as Olshausen, Alford, and others suppose? The latter view I cannot admit. It is against the whole scope and tenor of prophecy. There is to be but one great defection, one final apostasy, and that is at the close of the thousand years, when Satan shall be released from the

bottomless abyss, to go forth and deceive the nations for a short season previous to his complete and final overthrow (Rev. 20: 7, 8). In this defection Jew and Gentile will be alike involved. The defection of the Gentile world, thought to be found here in Luke, cannot then synchronize with that which follows the thousand years of millennial glory, and we must, therefore, suppose two great apostasies, one when the *times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*, the other, at the close of the thousand years of millennial glory. This we have no warrant in Scripture for believing. As the restoration of the Jews to God's favor must, in the nature of the case, take place before the binding of the Old Serpent and his confinement in the abyss, and therefore prior to the great defection spoken of as resulting from the loosing of Satan, it can be attended, as we believe, with no such era of wrath to the Gentile world, as this interpretation of Olshausen and Alford supposes.

But we are not left to conjecture on a point, pregnant with such consequences for the future. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans expressly declares that the conversion of the Jews to Christianity will be fraught with the richest blessings to the Gentile world. "Now if the fall of them [the Jews] be the riches of the world [i. e. be the occasion of spiritual blessings to the Gentile world] and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness [i. e. their restoration to God's favor]?" Rom. 11: 12. And again: "If the casting of them away be the reconciling of the world [i. e. the occasion of the conversion of many in the Gentile world], what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" Rom. 11: 15. This latter clause, standing as it does in antithesis with the words *reconciling of the world*, does not refer, as Prof. Stuart and some others think, to the general and wonderful conversion of the Jews to Christianity, but to the blessings which are to accrue from the restoration of that people, to the Gentile world, which, in comparison with the blessings resulting

from their fall and dispersion, would be *life from the dead*. These passages then teach beyond a question, that the restoration of the Jewish nation to God's favor, is to be attended with great blessings conferred on the world at large. This of course forbids our interpretation of the *fulfilment of the times of the Gentiles* as a dispensation of wrath, or what is the same thing, as "the filling of the cup of Gentile iniquity." Alford.

The meaning then of the passage, which in the light of the quotations from Rom. 11: 12, 15, we are enabled to give it, is this. Jerusalem shall lie waste until the full completion of the number of converts to Christianity, which were to result from the downfall of Judaism and the universal proffer of the gospel ensuing therefrom. When that number was complete in the coming ages, and Christianity had made full proof of its power to reclaim the Gentile world from the worship of idols, and the degrading vices of heathenism, to renovate the races, and establish among all nations the great principles of truth, integrity, virtue, peace, moral purity, then God would look again with favor upon his long rejected people, and restore them to the spiritual rights and immunities, of which they had so long been deprived. Trollope briefly expresses the true sense: "*By the times of the Gentiles* is meant the period at which all nations shall be converted to the Gospel; and the Jews restored to their country [or rather, restored to the favor of God] shall form, with the Gentiles, *one fold under one Shepherd*."

A question here arises, whether Jerusalem, having been so long trodden down, will be rebuilt at this time of the restoration of the Jews to the divine favor. Before the question is answered, we would premise, that in this glorious and spiritual renovation of the nation, it would be but a point of minor interest, whether amid the great cities of the earth, which at that time would number their population by millions and tens of millions, Jerusalem should be rebuilt and re-inhabited by the Jews. Yet we must confess our

25 ' And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

y Mat. 24: 29; Ma. 13: 24; 3 Ps. 3: 10, 12.

belief that the implied antithesis between the city of Jerusalem *trodden down*, and the state in which it shall be, after the term denoted by *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*, makes it quite clear that the city itself shall be rebuilt and restored to its former magnificence. This however would not necessarily imply a literal return of all the Jews to their paternal land. There would be many doubtless who would be inclined to return, especially if the government of the country were vested with independent power in their own nation. As for the theory which makes Jerusalem in those days the capital of the world, and the seat of the Messianic throne in temporal and visible majesty, to which all the nations of the earth shall come to worship and bring tribute, it is one of the most visionary and baseless which has ever been framed by the fancy of man. It has no foundation in Scripture, or in the deductions of sound reason. Christ will reign on earth, but his empire will be in and over the hearts of men, and not as a temporal prince in Jerusalem or any other city on earth. He has declared that his kingdom is not of this world (John 18: 36), which would not be true if he were, as this theory supposes, to descend from heaven and reign in temporal pomp and power in Jerusalem in the latter-day glory.

25-33. Here Luke is parallel with Matt. 24: 29-35; Mark 13: 24-31, on which see Notes. *Signs in the sun*, i. e. great and notable signs, such as are denominated in v. 11, "great signs from heaven." *Upon the earth distress, &c.* This is peculiar to Luke. The word rendered *distress*, literally signifies, *a holding together, a compression, or straitening*, occasioned by great distress, "*oppressive anguish*." Webster and Wilkinson. *Perplexity*, i. e. being at a

26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: ' for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

s Mat. 24: 29.

loss what to do in order to avert impending ruin. The word etymologically signifies, *without way or resource*, and hence to be in a state of *embarrassment or perplexity*. *The sea and the waves roaring*. A full comment on these words will be found in my Note on Matt. 24: 29. The words are here added, as the reason for this distress and perplexity of the nations.- The word *nations*, is referred by Webster and Wilkinson to the calamities which befell the whole Roman empire. The word rendered *waves*, is literally, *surge*, i. e. waves so towering as to break over and sweep the land as a mighty deluge. The absence of the article in the original gives vividness and force to the expression, *sea and surge roaring*, as though the sea were excited from its lowest depths, and surging with tempestuous roar and violence, over the whole habitable world. I know of no single verse in the Bible, where so much that is terrible is compressed in so few words. The heavens and the earth are in commotion, the hearts of men are sinking through fear and foreboding of impending judgments, and the very powers of heaven are shaken, as the precursors of the coming of the Son of man.

26. *Men's hearts failing, &c.* Stronger language could not be employed to denote the helplessness and terror, caused by these dread appearances and commotions of nature. The words, *failing them*, hardly express the full sense of the original; *swooning away, or dying within them*, would be a more literal translation. *For looking after*, i. e. through fearful apprehension of still greater calamities; or perhaps the idea may be more simply expressed, *not knowing what was awaiting them*. It enhances the power of present calamities, to forebode still greater and more fearful horrors to come.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man \*coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for \*your redemption draweth nigh.

29 \* And he spake to them a

a Mat. 24: 30; Ea. 1: 7; & 14: 14. b Ro. 8: 19, 23. c Mat. 24: 32; Ma. 13: 23.

27. Extended comments on this verse will be found in N. on Matt. 24: 30. Luke scarcely differs from Matthew and Mark, except in the use of the singular *cloud* instead of *clouds*. They refer to the cloud made up of dark folds, or clouds upon clouds; while Luke refers to it as a whole or single cloud. Mark employs *great*, as an epithet of *power*; Matthew and Luke connect it with *glory*. These trifling variations are important, as denoting the independence of the writers of one another.

28. *These things*, i. e. the convulsions of the heavens and earth, and the appearance of the Son of man, just spoken of. *Look up*; literally, *lift yourselves up* from the bowed down posture of grief and dismay, caused by these ominous sights and convulsions of nature. The same idea is contained in *lift up your heads*. They were no longer to remain in a state of dejection and alarm. The reason is given in the next clause, *for your redemption draweth nigh*, which, as I have remarked in my Note on Matt. 24: 31, with which passage I think this verse is parallel, refers to the protection vouchsafed to Christ's followers, during the horrors and carnage which characterized the siege of Jerusalem. The word rendered *redemption*, although its more frequent use in the New Testament is deliverance from the power and consequences of sin, yet it is sometimes employed, as here, of a deliverance from temporal calamities and physical death. See Heb. 11: 35.

29. This illustration from the fig-tree is essentially the same as that found in the parallel passage in Matthew and Mark. Luke does not confine the com-

parable; Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees;

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

parison to the fig-tree, but includes all the trees. The comparison was designed to show, that the signs of which he had spoken were as indubitable precursors of the appearance of the Son of man, as the sprouting of the fig-tree and other trees were indications of the approach of summer. Fig-trees begin to sprout and put forth about the time of the vernal equinox, the leaves being fully expanded about the end of March. The fruit makes its appearance before the leaves or flowers. *Ye know of your own selves*, without being specially informed thereof by others. In like manner his disciples would require no further indication of the approach of the Son of man, than the signs he had just mentioned.

31. *Come to pass* would have been better rendered *coming to pass*, i. e. in process of accomplishment. In verse 32, the tense requires the translation, *shall have come to pass*, full completion and accomplishment being intended. *Kingdom of God*, i. e. the development and display of the Messiah's power in the destruction of his enemies, and the establishment of his kingdom. The principal obstacle to the progress of Christianity was the Jewish persecuting power, and the tendency of many persons in the church to Judaize, through natural fondness for the gorgeous rites and ceremonies of the temple service, or from mistaken notions in regard to the true nature and purpose of the ceremonial law of Moses. When Jerusalem, the seat of this persecuting power, and this splendid and imposing ritual service, was destroyed, that arm of persecution was broken, and the gospel

32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

33 'Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.

34 And 'take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and

*d* Mat. 24 : 35. *e* Ro. 13 : 13; 1 Th. 5 : 6; 1 Pe. 4 : 7.

freed from the clogs and weights of Judaism, pursued its course without let or hindrance to universal dominion. Hence this new impulse given to the march of Christianity, was rightly and expressively denominated in our Lord's prophecy, as the *coming of the kingdom of God*.

33. This verse in the three evangelists has a verbal agreement, which shows that it is based on a proverbial saying. See N. on Matt. 24 : 35.

34-36. These verses are to be read in connection with Matt. 24 : 42; Mark 13 : 33-37. The warning language of Luke is drawn from revellings and debauch, by which the faculties are stupefied, and watchfulness against impending danger, intermitted. *Surfeiting* has reference to revellings indulged in to such excess, as to produce sudden giddiness of the head. Hence it may be well translated *drunken fits*, being properly the effect of *drunkenness*, denoted by the next word. "The one denotes *effect*, the other, the *act* of intemperance." Trollope. *Cares of this life*, i. e. temporal cares and anxieties. These are warned against, as tending to turn away the mind from that, which on this occasion was to occupy their chief attention. Compare Rom. 13 : 13; 1 Pet. 2 : 11; 1 John 2 : 16. Sensuality and worldliness are sins, against which too loud and urgent warnings cannot be uttered. So insensibly do they wind around and strangle the graces of the christian life, that their cold and deadly embrace is not perceived until a lasting injury has been done to the interests

cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35 For 'as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 'Watch ye therefore, and 'pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass,

*1* Th. 5 : 2; *2* Pe. 3 : 10; *Ro.* 8 : 8; & *16* : 15. *g* Mat. 24 : 42; & 25 : 13; *Ma.* 13 : 33. *A* Ch. 13 : 1.

of the immortal soul. *And so that day, &c.* This is the result of the heaviness and insensibility of mind, against which our Lord here warns his followers. The verb rendered *come upon*, has frequently the sense to *come upon suddenly*, as when a fowler steals upon a bird, or an enemy surprises his foe from a well chosen place of ambush. Such is its meaning here, as is evident from the following verse, which is continuative and expansive of the same sentiment.

35. *As a snare, &c.* It shall come sudden and unexpected, as a snare sprung upon a bird, or the closing of a trap upon an animal. *Them that dwell*; literally, *that are sitting*, which Webster and Wilkinson interpret as a simple Orientalism for *dwelling, living*, but which seems to me to contain here the additional idea of carnal ease and security. *Face*, i. e. surface. *The whole earth* is not here the whole habitable world, but the whole land of Judea, in which restricted sense, the word is sometimes found in the New Testament.

36. The parallel to this is Matt. 24 : 42; Mark 13 : 35-37. Matthew is very brief; Mark enumerates the times when the master of the house might be supposed to come, and makes the uncertainty at which of these seasons he might come, the basis of exhortation to continued watchfulness. Luke draws his argument for watchfulness and prayer, from the desire which all his followers might be supposed to feel, of standing before the Son of man, approved of him as good and faithful, and worthy to be exempt from all those im-

and 'to stand before the Son of man.

37 <sup>a</sup> And in the daytime he was teaching in the temple; and 'at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount of Olives*.

38 And all the people came

<sup>a</sup> Pa. 1:5; Ep. 6:18. <sup>b</sup> John 8:1, 2.  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. 22:39.

pending calamities. *Watch.* This injunction is rendered emphatic by the warning which preceded it. *Therefore* refers to the suddenness of the coming of the day spoken of, making it necessary to be watchful and prayerful. *Pray always.* The disciples were to be in the constant possession of the spirit of prayer, by which their souls would be drawn out in frequent and fervent wrestlings with God for a blessing. Compare Eph. 6:18; 2 Thes. 5:17. The duties of watchfulness and prayer lie at the very basis of the christian life, and it is not wonderful that they should be so often found joined together. *To stand before the Son of man* acquitted and approved of Him. The context refers this primarily to the security from the temporal evils, which would overtake the unbelieving Jews, at the capture of their city. But as this is the closing portion of the first part of the prophecy (see N. on Matt. 24:42), the subject in its higher and more distant aspect being continued in Matt. 24:43 (on which see Note), it will do no violence to the laws of sound interpretation, to refer this *standing before the Son of man*, to the awards of the final judgment—that more distant and august event being suggested by this portraiture of the destruction of Jerusalem, which so aptly symbolized the final coming of Christ to take vengeance upon the ungodly.

37, 38. These verses, in which Luke denotes the manner in which our Lord spent his time in this his passion-week, are placed by Dr. Robinson after the cleansing of the temple (19:45-48). It is evident that they are placed here by

early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

#### CHAPTER XXII.

**N**OW <sup>a</sup> the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover.

2 And <sup>b</sup> the chief priests and

<sup>a</sup> Mat. 26:2; Ma. 14:1.  
<sup>b</sup> Pa. 2:2; John 11:47; Ac. 4:27.

Luke, without strict regard to chronology, for Jesus, at the time when he pronounced the foregoing prediction in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem, had left the city, to which he returned as a public teacher no more. *In the daytime*; literally, in or during the days of this his last week. *In the temple*, where the people would naturally congregate for religious instruction. *At night he went out*, &c. It appears from this passage, that our Lord retired each night from the city, probably for the purpose of concealing himself from the chief priests and Pharisees, who had now fully resolved to effect his death. We are not to suppose from this passage, that Jesus passed his nights in the open air. There were doubtless friends on the eastern slope of the mountain, in Bethany or its vicinity, who were ready each night to furnish him with a hospitable entertainment. Compare Matt. 21:17, on which see Note. *Came early.* The original has this force, *rose early and came*. This shows the eagerness of the people to receive instruction from his lips, and also that he came at a very early hour into the city to resume his public teaching. This was the habit of each day, until he left the city for the last time before his passion.

#### CHAPTER XXII.

1, 2. CONSPIRACY OF THE RULERS. *Jerusalem.* Fifth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 26:1-5; Mark 14:1. 2. The account of this transaction in Matthew is quite full, but that given by Mark and Luke is only a compendium. Luke however adds one item, which is

scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4 And he went his way, and

• Mat. 26: 14; Ma. 14: 10; John 13: 2, 27.

only inferred from the account of Matthew and Mark, and which is of much consequence as furnishing an index to the movements of the chief priests and Pharisees at this time. *Sought how they might kill him, for they feared, &c.* This shows that all the efforts were put forth to get possession of his person, when the people had retired to their homes or lodging-places, and would not be at hand to defend him. The treacherous proposal of Judas was therefore just what was required to meet the desperate strait, to which they were driven in carrying out their murderous intentions towards Jesus.

3-6. TREACHERY OF JUDAS. *Jerusalem.* Fifth day of the Week. See Na. on Matt. 26: 14-16; Mark 14: 10, 11. Between this and the preceding section, Dr. Robinson places the supper at Bethany (Matt. 26: 6-13; Mark 14: 3-9; John 12: 2-8). It was probably in consequence of the rebuke which he received from our Lord at this feast, that he conceived the plan of betraying him to his enemies. See N. on Matt. 26: 14. Luke is here rather more full than Matthew or Mark, especially in vs. 3 and 6.

3. *Then entered Satan, &c.* This is peculiar to Luke. In John (13: 27) Satan is said to have entered into Judas, just after he had received the sop from our Lord. There is no disagreement. Luke refers to the first special Satanic influence exerted upon him, by which it came into his heart (see John 13: 2) to betray his Master. After the sop, he was possessed anew and with more virulence by Satan, and rushed forth to consummate his treachery, by guiding the enemies of Jesus to the place of his concealment. It is worthy

of note, that neither Matthew nor Mark say any thing about this Satanic possession of Judas. *Being of the number, &c.* A circumstance, heightening the baseness of his treachery.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto

d Zec. 11: 12.

of note, that neither Matthew nor Mark say any thing about this Satanic possession of Judas. *Being of the number, &c.* A circumstance, heightening the baseness of his treachery.

4. *He went his way; literally, having departed* from the supper at Bethany. He returned at once to the city, and made his compact with the chief priests and captains. These latter officers, referred to only by Luke, were the captains of the Levitical guard, who were stationed at the temple, and as might be expected were in the interest of the priests, and therefore were consulted on this occasion. As the object of this consultation was how they might apprehend Jesus, the experience and judgment of these captains would be of great use, to determine the question whether the proposal of Judas was worthy of acceptance. Indeed Dr. Jahn remarks, that these captains of the bands of Levites, who watched the temple, were priests themselves of high standing. Theophylact says, that they were officers charged with the superintendence of the buildings and the orderly arrangement of all things pertaining to the temple service, and that their chief was next in rank to the high priest. This same class of officers are spoken of in Acts 4: 1; 5: 24. Webster and Wilkinson think that reference is had to these Jewish officers in Ps. 134.

5. *Covenanted to give him.* This shows that the money was not to be paid, until Jesus had been actually delivered into their hands. *Money; literally, silver.* "Thirty pieces of silver." Matthew.

6. *He promised to fulfil his part of the compact, on condition of receiving the stipulated reward. It was a delib-*

them in the absence of the multitude.

7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

o Mat. 26 : 17; Ma. 14 : 12.

erate and well-understood bargain. The verb is so compounded in the original, as to be intensive, *he faithfully or strongly promised*. Their anxiety to have Judas fulfil his promise was doubtless met, on his part, with a reiteration of it, and that too, in the strongest terms. *Sought opportunity*. The tense of the original gives this sense, *he kept on the watch for an opportunity*, i. e. a convenient occasion. The difficulty in the execution of this promise lay in the great attachment of the people to Jesus, which would forbid the offering him any violence, unless it were done in the dead of the night. This is referred to in the next clause, *in the absence of the multitude*, who if present would rescue him from his enemies.

7-14. PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER. *Bethany. Jerusalem*. Fifth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 26 : 17-19; Mark 14 : 12-16. The narratives of the three Evangelists, especially Mark and Luke, have a very close resemblance. Matthew is much the most concise.

7. *Then came the day*. In Matthew and Mark, *the first day*. It was the 14th day of the month Nisan, and was called the first day of unleavened bread, because on that day the preparation was made for the passover, to be celebrated the same evening, which according to the Jewish mode of reckoning time, would usher in the 15th day. This whole subject is commented on and explained in my Note on Matthew 26 : 17, to which the reader is referred.

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

11 And ye shall say unto the good man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

*When the passover must be killed*, according to the precept given in Exod. 12 : 3-27; Levit. 23 : 4-8; Deut. 16 : 1-8. In Mark it is *when they* (i. e. the people, the natives) *killed the passover*. Luke refers to the necessity arising from the legal enactment of Moses; Mark, to its general and uniform observance by the people.

8. *Peter and John*. The names of the two disciples (Mark 14 : 13) are here given. The matter in hand was so solemn and important, that he commissioned his two leading disciples to go on this errand. The reason why Mark omitted to mention their names, is suggested in the Note on the passage above referred to. *Prepare us the passover*, i. e. make preparations in regard to the room, and other things pertaining to the celebration of the feast.

9. *Where wilt thou, &c.* In Matthew and Mark, the question would seem to have been put first by the disciples. But here we see that it arose from the previous command of our Lord.

10. *When ye are entered into the city*. This is more definite than Mark's *go ye into the city*. So Mark's *follow him*, is in Luke, *follow him into the house where he entereth in*. What therefore is left very indefinite by "*to such a man*" in Matthew, is in the other Evangelists made definite and plain. Some think from Matthew's form of expression, that our Lord gave the name of the person, who would meet them in the manner here described. But this man was probably a servant, and had no con-



12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

14 / And when the hour was

/ Mat. 26: 20; Ma. 14: 17.

nection with the incident, further than that he was to be followed by the disciples into the house. It is not likely therefore that his name would be given.

14-30. THE PASSOVER. *Jerusalem.* Evening introducing the sixth day of the Week. See Na. on Matt. 26: 20; Mark 14: 17. All this section except v. 14 and vs. 19-23, is peculiar to Luke, and constitutes a highly interesting and useful portion, as adding to the fulness of the detail, with which a comparison between the Evangelists will show the history of this last supper of our Lord to have been written.

14. *The hour* of partaking of the paschal feast. *He sat down*, i. e. reclined at the meal according to the oriental custom. *And the twelve apostles with him* is more full and definite than Matthew's "with the twelve." Luke seems to have had his eye on the fact of the presence of Judas with the rest of the apostles, which from what was said in vs. 3-6, might have been with his readers a matter of doubt.

15. *With desire I have desired* is a Hebraism for, *I have greatly desired*. The expression is exceedingly intensified. Alford refers this desire not so much to the supper, though this formed an element in it, as to his anxiety to accomplish the baptism referred to in 12: 50. But I must take the very opposite view. That the object of our Lord's longing desire was to partake of this feast of love with his disciples before he left them, is evident from the explicit terms in which it is here affirmed, and from the obvious import of the context. He was about to establish and celebrate for the first and only time during his brief sojourn on earth, the sacramental

come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer:

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, 'until

g Ch. 14: 15; Ac. 10: 41; Ra. 19: 9.

festival which has ever since bound together and cemented the hearts of his followers, and served more than any other ordinance to keep in vivid remembrance his dying love for men. Was not this an occasion then, to which in the fulness of his love he might be supposed to look forward with longing desire? *This passover* refers to the whole feast, including as its principal element, the Eucharist, which was now to be established. *With you* my beloved disciples. "He speaks as the Father of his house to his children, with whom he is about to leave his Testament, joyful that he has some who have continued so long with him that he can see and address in them his future Church, the recompense of his griefs." Stier. *Suffer*. He had so often predicted his sufferings and death, that he now refers to it by one comprehensive term.

16. This is added as a reason why this feast of the passover had peculiar interest with him. It was to be the last one, which he would celebrate with his disciples on earth. As he was well acquainted with the spiritual significance of this ordinance, and knew that the great offering of Himself which it symbolized, was about to be made upon the altar of Eternal Justice, there were concentrated in this passover elements of interest, which stirred his soul to its very depths, and impelled him to give utterance to the great desire which he had felt to celebrate it with his disciples. *Until it* (i. e. the paschal ordinance) *be fulfilled*, &c. This as above remarked was the last passover which would be celebrated before the slaying of the Lamb, the great sacrificial vic-

it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves :

18 For <sup>†</sup>I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine,

<sup>†</sup> Mat. 26 : 29 ; Ma. 14 : 25.

tim, of which the paschal lamb was the type. There was now to be the fulfilment or completion of this symbolic act in the death of Christ. Hence this was another prophetic annunciation, on the part of our Lord, that his death was at hand, and is connected with the foregoing context, as a reason why he had so strong a desire to eat it once more with his disciples. *In the kingdom of God*, i. e. the Messianic dispensation prefigured by this ritual observance, which had primary reference to the salvation and deliverance of God's people from their Egyptian oppressors. Our Lord would never again eat the passover, as it had been eaten in the old dispensation, for that was now about to pass away. Nor would he partake of the feast of which this was the type, again in the flesh. But this does not forbid the participation of our Lord in that great spiritual festival, which in heaven shall be spread for all who are washed in his blood, and who shall be deemed worthy to sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Of the transcendent glories and blessedness of that feast, we can have but a faint conception here, but that it has been provided and is in a state of readiness for all God's elect, we have every assurance in his holy word. We are, however, to be extremely cautious against admitting any thing gross or material in our conceptions of this blessedness. Its highest realization on earth is the love of Jesus Christ shed abroad in our heart, and we have no doubt but the same love, in a higher degree, will constitute the chief element in the bliss of heaven.

17. *The cup.* Not the sacramental cup, which is referred to in v. 20, and which was probably the third cup, which

until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 ¶ 'And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, saying, This is my body which is given for you : <sup>†</sup>this do in remembrance of me.

<sup>†</sup> Mat. 26 : 26 ; Ma. 14 : 22. & 1 Co. 11 : 24.

was drunk at the paschal festival. This was one of the previous cups, probably the first one (see N. on Matt. 26 : 27). *Divide it, &c.* Pass it around, so that you all may partake of it. Our Lord, beyond all question, partook himself of this cup, as he had just spoken of his desire to eat of the passover, of which this cup was a part. The participle implies this, the literal signification of which is, *having taken the cup for himself.* But we have no evidence whatever that he partook of the sacramental cup. The verb there employed both for the bread and wine, signifies, *to take into the hand for another.*

18. In Matthew and Mark, this declaration of our Lord follows the establishment of the Eucharist. But may not the saying have been repeated, as applicable alike to the passover and to the ordinance of the Lord's supper? The words are somewhat varied in their quotation by Matthew and Mark, and are so introduced there as to render it certain, that they were spoken at the close of the Eucharist. If they were not also uttered at the time when he passed to the disciples the first cup of the passover, we must suppose that Luke recorded them by way of anticipation, as we find, from some law of association or grouping together, he often does in contravention to the strict order of events. *Fruit of the vine, i. e. wine. Until the kingdom of God, &c.* This sentiment is parallel with the preceding clause, *until it be fulfilled, &c.* See N. on Matt. 26 : 29.

19, 20. These verses refer to the establishment of the Eucharist, on which see Ns. on Matt. 26 : 26-29 ; Mark 14 : 22-25. *This do in remembrance, &c.* This clause is also found in 1 Cor. 11 : 24.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

1 Co. 10 : 16.

It is omitted in Matthew and Mark. In like manner the words, *which is given for you* (1 Cor. 11 : 24, *which is broken for you*), are wanting in Matthew and Mark. *This do* refers to the breaking and eating of bread. *In remembrance of me* does not reach the exact sense of the original. *For the remembrance of me* (i. e. in order that you may remember me), is the better and more literal interpretation. It shows the intent and purpose of the ordinance. The word rendered *remembrance* is literally *the recalling to mind*, and refers here to the vivid sense of Christ's sufferings and death, which this supper is designed and adapted to produce in such as partake of it in penitence, humility, and faith. To those who obey this injunction, and strive to obtain through this blessed ordinance clearer and more affecting views of the preciousness of the offering made for the sin of the world, will Jesus manifest himself with peculiar nearness and tenderness, so that He will be evidently set forth as one crucified for their sin, and risen for their justification.

20. *Likewise*, i. e. having offered thanks to God (Matthew and Mark), and holding it in his hand to give to his disciples. *New testament or new covenant*. See N. on Matt. 26 : 28. The same word is employed here as in Heb. 8 : 8. It signifies a covenant or promise on the part of God to his people, sanctioned with the blood of victims (see Exod. 24 : 3-12; Deut. 5 : 2), and depending upon certain stipulated conditions. It is here called the *new covenant*, in contradistinction rather from the Mosaic than from the Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 15 : 1-18; 17 : 1-19; Gal. 3 : 17), which in its most enlarged sense embraced all the blessings and provisions of the new covenant, in the promise that in "his seed all the nations of the earth should

21 "But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

Ma. 41 : 9; Mat. 26 : 21, 23; Ma. 14 : 18; John 13 : 21, 26.

be blessed (Gen. 22 : 18). This *new testament*, unlike the *old covenant*, which was ratified by the blood of bulls, and goats, and calves, was ratified by the blood of Christ, "who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, to purge the conscience from dead works to serve the living God; for which cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Heb. 9 : 14, 15. The *cup of the new testament* was so called, because the wine was emblematical of its ratification by the blood of Jesus Christ. See Heb. 9 : 11-28. *Which is shed, &c.* This grammatically refers to cup, but in reality to *blood*, as will be seen by a reference to the parallel passage in Matthew and Mark. The wine, expressed from the bruised and trodden grapes, and poured forth into the cup, becomes an apt and striking emblem of the blood of Christ shed or poured out for the sins of men. *For you*, i. e. in behalf of you. An expiatory or vicarious shedding of blood is clearly taught in this form of expression.

21. See Ns. on Matt. 26 : 21; Mark 14 : 18. According to the order of events in Luke, it would appear that Judas partook of the Eucharist. But we have seen in this evangelist so many instances of a departure from the strict order of events, that we should hesitate very much in taking this as conclusive evidence that such was the real fact. Matthew and Mark both represent the incident referred to here by Luke, as taking place while they were eating the passover, and before the establishment of the Lord's supper. No one who compares the order of these two evangelists with John 13 : 21-35, can well avoid the conclusion that Ju-

22 "And truly the Son of man goeth," as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!

\* Mat. 26: 24. o Ac. 2: 23; & 4: 26.

das left the table on his dark and traitorous errand, before the establishment of the institution of the Lord's supper. *The hand, &c.* An Oriental mode of expression, to denote that a person was reclining at the same table with another. The odiousness of his act is also strongly set forth in the violation of all the laws and rites of hospitality, which was evinced in this betrayal of one with whom he had been on intimate terms of intercourse. *That betrayeth me* has in all the Evangelists the participial form in the present tense, which gives the sense *that is betraying me*. His mind was filled with his traitorous plans, and although the overt act had been only in part performed (see vs. 8-6), yet as he reclined at the table, his thoughts were busy in devising and maturing the means of effecting his promise made to the chief priests and Pharisees.

22. See Ns. on Matt. 26: 24; Mark 14: 21. Luke's *as it was determined*, is in Matthew and Mark, *as it is written of him*. The literal signification is *according to that which has been accurately defined or bounded off* in the plan or determination of God. The idea is that the whole transaction, including not only the main or principal event, but all its accessories, was in accordance with the sovereign purpose and foreknowledge of God. Hence his betrayal by Judas was a part of this divine plan, and yet such is the liberty of human choice and purpose, so free was Judas in all that he did to have done otherwise, had he chosen thus to do, that his guilt was the same as though his deed of betrayal had never been contemplated in the divine mind. Compare Acts 2: 23, where it is expressly declared that Jesus was delivered to be crucified, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and yet that it was with wicked hands that he was crucified and slain by his enemies.

23 "And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

p Mat. 26: 22; John 13: 22, 25.

It was no excuse for their atrocious deed, that the Lamb without blemish and without spot was foreordained before the foundation of the world to be slain for the redemption of man (1 Pet. 1: 18-21). They acted as free moral agents. They planned, counselled, purposed, executed, just as men do in all the concerns of life, freely and without constraint. Yet the great truth is here revealed that the wrath of man, in this most awful act ever performed on earth, was praising God (Ps. 76: 10), in the carrying out of his purpose that his Son Jesus Christ should die for the sins of men, and by precisely the same death which was inflicted upon him on Calvary (Ps. 22: 16).

23. We are here informed, that such was the effect upon them of this sad announcement made by Jesus, that they not only inquired of Jesus as to their individual guilt or innocence (see Matt. 26: 26; Mark 14: 19), but instituted an inquiry among themselves, who of their number would be likely to do so dark and treacherous a deed. This shows the depth of their concern at so startling an announcement. *To inquire*; literally, *to search or seek out together*. They were all anxious to know who was the traitor. This shows that Judas had been thus far very successful in concealing his true character, for he does not seem, from any thing here recorded, to have been particularly suspected. *Which of them, &c.* The original is so constructed, that this is laid down as the point of their inquiry, as though it had been written, *they began to inquire in regard to this thing (viz.) which of them, &c.* The words *which of them* are literally *who of them there*, i. e. who, in case of such a betrayal as the one announced, would be the one to do it: There is a shade of doubt communicated by the particle *then* or *in that case*, in the original, that

## 24 ' And there was also a strife

q Mat. 9: 84; Luke 9: 44.

there could be one of the apostles who would do such a deed.

24. *And there was also a strife, &c.* When we take into consideration the time and circumstances of the occasion, the strife here referred to must be regarded, as one of the most remarkable instances of human frailty, which is to be found, I had almost said, in the history of man. Two questions naturally arise, as to the time of this strife, and the particular point in reference to which it arose. The answer to the former will help us to solve the latter. There is much diversity of opinion in respect to the precise time when it took place, some expositors referring it to the time when they were about to recline at the table or *triclinium*; others considering it as taking place after the announcement of our Lord, that one of his disciples should betray him. Its collocation in Luke is advanced as a ground for this latter opinion. But we have seen how frequently Luke interposes fragmental incidents, out of the order in which they took place, and nowhere does this feature of his gospel appear more prominent than in these last sayings and doings of Christ (see N. on 21: 37). Nor does it seem to me a very natural sequence of so solemn and exciting an announcement as was made in vs. 21, 22, unless the apostles were different from all other men, and could pass from one of the most touching scenes of self-examination and inquiry almost instantaneously to one of strife and angry contention. I am fully persuaded therefore that this dispute took place at the commencement of the feast, as they were about to sit down or recline at the table; and that its position in the general narration should be immediately preceding John 13: 1-20. If so, we can have little doubt that the subject of their strife was the places of honor at the table (see Ns. on Matt. 23: 6; 26: 21). The words *which of them should be accounted the greatest*, imply therefore a dispute as to who should have the chief reclin-

among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

ing place at the table, which became the more warm and exciting from the fact that the assignation of this to any one of their number, would indicate his claim to the highest office or post of honor in the Messiah's kingdom, which they believed now about to be set up, and of the temporal character of which their minds were far from being wholly dispossessed. The construction in the original is like that of v. 23, the relative clause *which of them*, having the force of *as to the question which of them*. The word *greatest* refers here to eminence in rank.

25, 26. These words of our Lord are intended as a reply to the strife which had arisen among his disciples. But a question here arises, whether this reproof preceded or followed the washing of the disciples' feet related by John (13: 1-20). Dr. Robinson and other recent harmonists place it before that incident; Doddridge and others of his time, after it. This seems to me to be the more natural and impressive order. Their attention would be more excited to the words of the reproof, and their hearts prepared to profit by it, after witnessing their Lord's strange act of condescension in washing their feet. The point of the reply is, that kings and men in authority are the ones who arrogate to themselves the title of benefactors, and are thus styled by their flatterers. Opposed to this is, "but I am among you as he that serveth." v. 27. Hence the argument is by a sort of inversion—that being placed last which logically should have been first—*ye shall not be so*, i. e. ye shall not seek for the appellation of benefactors of men, by striving for preëminence or the possession of worldly power and distinction. You are to gain the reputation of being public benefactors by imitating me, your Master, who am among you as one that serveth. Such is the obvious and natural sense of these verses. Some verbal explanations are, however, necessary, to the right understanding of the sentiment.

25 'And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

r Mat. 20 : 25; Ma. 10 : 42.

25. *Kings of the Gentiles.* Reference is had not only to dynasties of kings, like the Antiochuses of Syria, and the Ptolemies of Egypt, who assumed the titles of Saviour, Preserver, Benefactor, Pious, Brother-loving, Father-loving, Mother-loving, although in general monsters of cruelty and sensuality, but to inferior princes, rulers, and governors, who assumed such titles of their own choice, or received them from those fawning sycophants who were to be found in the train of all great men. Ptolemy obtained the title of Euergetes (*Benefactor*), by large donations to the populace. Tertullus administered in this way to the vanity of Felix (Acts 24 : 2, 3), where, from the apology made in v. 4, we should gather that not a small portion of his speech was comprised in the exordium, filled up with false and fulsome compliments to this cruel and dissolute Roman governor. *Exercise lordship*, i. e. are the ones who play the lord. There is a slight shade of sarcasm in the word. *Over them*, i. e. the Gentiles. *They that exercise authority upon them*, i. e. those persons who thus lord it over them, and are in possession of authority. *Are called benefactors*, i. e. are the ones who assume, or have given to them, the title of benefactors. The very application of these titles to such tyrannical and licentious princes, rendered them unfit to be used by the followers of Christ. They had entered the service of one, who himself sought not earthly distinction, and would not have his followers desirous of such fleeting honors. They were to imitate him who was among them as one that serveth; and not like the Gentile kings and rulers, seeking in addition to their lordly dominion, the most extravagant and fulsome titles and compliments from their oppressed and down-trodden subjects.

26 'But ye shall not be so: 'but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

s Mat. 20 : 26; 1 Pe. 5 : 3. ‡ Ch. 9 : 48.

26. *But ye shall not be so*, i. e. seeking after titles and posts of distinction. This rebuke is evidently aimed at the notion which, notwithstanding our Lord's instructions, yet lingered in their minds, that Jesus was to be a great temporal monarch, who would reward his followers with posts of honor and emolument. He disabuses their minds of this false and hurtful idea, by most unequivocally declaring, that his disciples should not only give up all such notions of supremacy, but should absolutely invert the very order of precedence established among men, the one who aspired to be chief voluntarily assuming the lowest and most humble position in the Master's service. This was a strange rule and law to be laid down in their hearing, but when they called to mind what they had just seen in their Lord's condescending love (see John 13 : 1-20), they could make no reply. So far as we know, this was the last strife for supremacy which ever marred their intercourse on earth. Our Lord's symbolic act of washing their feet, and his positive declaration that they were to act on a totally different principle from those earthly potentates, to whose honors and titles they were looking with such admiration, forever dispelled from their mind this desire for earthly distinctions, and their only rivalry afterward was a generous emulation as to who of them should evince the most self-denial and devotion in the service of their blessed Master. *Greatest* is here opposed to *younger*. Webster and Wilkinson refer to Acts 5 : 6, in proof, that *younger* refers to those of inferior rank and capacity. Of course, *greatest* would in that case refer to those of the highest power and station. But such grades of power and station not only did not exist, but were absolutely forbidden by our Lord; and I cannot but

27 \* For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at

\* Ch. 13: 37.

think, therefore, that reference must be had to those *greatest in age*, and to whom the direction of affairs would naturally fall. Such were not to lord it over their brethren, on account of the dignity and precedence given them by their age, but were to be meek, humble, courteous, unassuming as the youngest of their number, and thus evince that they were brethren and servants of one Master. The sentiment then is, that the eldest, to whom the preëminence and respect due to age would naturally and properly belong, should be as condescending and humble as the youngest of the number. The same idea is enforced and expanded in the corresponding clause, *he that is chief, &c.*, where there is a strong antithesis between *chief* and *he that doth serve*, i. e. is servant of the company. Between all Christ's followers there should be such a breaking down of worldly distinctions, that none should esteem themselves above others (see Rom. 12: 3, 10), or seek that preëminence in rank and station, which is so greatly coveted by worldly men. This does not imply that there will not be distinctive gifts and graces, by which one Christian brother is fitted for a service or station for which another has far inferior qualifications; or that due honor is not to be given to such, as by their eminent talent or service in the cause of Christ are entitled thereto.

27. Our Lord now illustrates and confirms his teaching, by referring to his own humility and condescension, in taking the office of one who serveth at the table, while upon his disciples was conferred the honorable position of guests. He first proposes the question so easy of answer, as to the relative superiority of the guests over those who serve at the feasts. The words, *I am among you as he that serveth*, receive great emphasis from the fact, that

meat? but \* I am among you as he that serveth.

28 Ye are they which have

\* Mat. 20: 28; John 13: 13, 14; Phil. 2: 7.

Jesus had just been washing the disciples' feet.

28. Having administered this gentle rebuke to his disciples, our Lord now encourages them with the promise of true and lasting glory in his Father's kingdom, for their fidelity to him in the midst of his trials and temptations. Thus while he rebuked and corrected their false notions of worldly preëminence and leadership, he is careful not to discourage them by stripping the future of all honors and rewards. "It is not the time now for reproaches. He had been constrained to reprove them slightly—His whole purpose now is to bless his disciples and load his faithful ones with his gifts, for his *faithful ones* they are, with all their infirmity and folly; else would He be now sitting thus in the midst, and they thus surrounding him?" Stier. *Have continued with me* is something more than simply remaining with Jesus. It indicates sympathy, fidelity, love, obedience. The idea is in a manner one of companionship or "fellowship in his sufferings." Not that the disciples could share in the peculiar agony which weighed down the blessed Redeemer's spirit; but they were with him as sympathizing friends, and as such were unspeakably dear to him. *In my temptations.* This is here put figuratively for trials, sorrows, afflictions. But this is not all. A deeper meaning lies in the word. It is a declaration of our Lord, that his whole life had been full of temptations, from the time when the grand assault was made upon him in the wilderness by the adversary, until his last and final struggle with the tempter in the hour of the prince of darkness (see v. 53; John 14: 30). The expression "departed from him for a season" in 4: 13, does not mean an absolute withdrawal of the adversary, but only that he desisted from such mighty efforts, as he had just made to tempt Jesus to sin, until he renewed them at the close of

continued with me in 'my temptations.

29 And 'I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

y He. 4: 15. s Mat. 24: 47; ch. 12: 32; 2 Co. 1: 7; 2 Ti. 2: 12.

our Lord's earthly ministry, for aught we know, with greatly increased virulence and pertinacity. It is probable that Jesus was subject through his whole life, to a greater or less degree, to temptations, yet so mild when compared with these great assaults upon his integrity, that they are not particularly referred to. We might gather this, not only from the present passage, but from Heb. 2: 18; 4: 15; 5: 8, where reference seems to be had to a life of trial and temptation, and not to one or two efforts made by Satan to tempt him from his allegiance. This is also a fair inference from such passages as John 6: 15 (on which see Note), where we are told that when the people would have made him a king, even by force, should he not willingly consent, he departed into a mountain to pray; and from Matt. 16: 22, 23, on which see Note. He did not yield in the least degree to these temptations, but that he had them in common with other men, we think there can be no doubt.

29. *And I.* As you have been faithful to me, *I also* will not be unmindful of you, when I am exalted to my kingly dignity. *I appoint.* The verb literally means to *devise* or *bequeath* as by will or testament, and hence has here the nature of a solemn promise or covenant, based on the same immutable love and faithfulness, which secures beyond the possibility of failure the inheritance promised in the covenant of redemption to the Son from the Father. This is the more emphatic and significant from the symbolical ratification of this *new covenant*, in the sacrament of the cup, now about to be instituted, and which was called the *new testament in his blood*. This heirship or inheritance to which they were appointed, was then to be established and confirmed by the shed-

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

α Mat. 8: 11; ch. 14: 15; Re. 19: 9. β Ps. 49: 14; Mat. 19: 28. 1 Co. 6: 2; Ro. 8: 21.

dying of his own blood, than which nothing could render it more sure and determinate. A *kingdom*, not an independent one, but his own kingdom, of the glory and blessedness of which they were to be partakers, and in a sense associated with Him in its government, (see v. 30). They were to be, as Stier remarks, *co-regents* with Christ, or what perhaps is more suitable to the custom of earthly monarchs, who reward their faithful and favorite servants with posts of honor and power, the apostles were promised offices of high spiritual dignity, in this kingdom which had been appointed him by his Father. This accords better with the language of v. 30. The word *kingdom*, joined to this clause in our English translation, belongs to the following clause, *as my Father hath appointed unto me*, and of course must be mentally supplied in the former clause. The idiom of the Greek and English, is different in this respect that the Greek employs the ellipsis in the former clause; the English, in the latter clause. *Hath appointed* in the economy of redemption.

30. *That ye may eat and drink, &c.* The language is derived from the custom of ancient and oriental kings, to invite to their own table their chief ministers and confidential servants, as a mark of royal favor and esteem. These persons who were admitted on such terms of easy and familiar intercourse, were styled *table companions*, *royal messmates*. The expression *my table in my kingdom*, is equivalent to *at the royal banquets*. In like manner, *sit on thrones*, denotes their kingly dignity, the imagery being drawn from the thrones of earthly kings. It cannot but be remarked how this fulness of expression in regard to their future dignity, looks back to the angry strife



31 ¶ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, 'Satan hath de-

c 1 Pa. 5: 8.

which had arisen among them, as to who of them should be accounted greatest (v. 24). They were to be exalted even to kingly dignity, but in a way far different from what they expected. *Judging.* In ancient times, kings performed also the functions of judges. See 2 Sam. 15: 4; 1 Kings 3: 9; 2 Chron. 1: 11; Ps. 72: 2. *The twelve tribes of Israel*, i. e. the spiritual Israel. The language conforms to the prediction, that the Messiah was to sit upon the throne of David, and rule over the people Israel. See 2 Sam. 7: 12-16; 1 Chron. 17: 11-14; Ps. 72: 1-17; Matt. 2: 6; Luke 1: 32-33.

31-34. JESUS FORETELLS THE FALL OF PETER. *Jerusalem.* Evening introducing the sixth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 26: 31-35; Mark 14: 27-31; John 13: 38. This portion is peculiar to Luke, and has its place between vs. 33 and 34 in Matthew, and vs. 29 and 30 in Mark.

31. These words were spoken by our Lord to Peter, after his strong and self-confident averment, that though all men should be offended because of his Master, he would never be offended. In order to obtain a clear view of this remarkable lapse of Peter, the reader should turn to John 13: 36-38, and then peruse Matt. 26: 31-35; Mark 14: 27-31. By this comparison of the Evangelists, it will be seen how confident even to boasting was Peter, that he would not falter in the trial of his integrity. The language of our Lord is designed to disclose to Peter, the danger to which he was to be exposed from the assaults of his adversary, and by this forewarning to arm him against the force of the temptation. How kind and considerate was this, that on the very eve of his own agony and death, he should be so mindful of his disciple, as to warn him against the danger, to which he was that very night to be exposed through the craft and malice of Satan. *Hath desired to have you; lit-*

*sired to have you, that he may 'sift you as wheat:*

d Am. 9: 2.

erally, *has asked or demanded you*, as Satan demanded that Job should be given into his power, in order to test, with evil intent, his integrity. The expression is a remarkable one, and in connection with Job 1: 12; 2: 6, opens a field of conjecture, as to how far Satan acts permissively in tempting good men, and under what laws of restriction and restraint he approaches and assails them with his temptations. *That he may sift you.* The word *you*, is in the plural, and is therefore inclusive of all the disciples, except Judas, who had now left them to consummate his deed of treachery. The sifting process here spoken of, must be taken in a bad sense, of the endeavor of Satan to effect the separation of some of the disciples, and Peter in particular, from fidelity to Jesus, as chaff is separated by a winnowing process from the wheat. Satan desires them that he may try them by this sifting process, but it is to effect their ruin. Stier rather inclines to the idea that the words, *that he may sift you as wheat*, do not here denote design or purpose, but are rather an accompanying, modifying explanation, *while he will sift you, &c.* This expositor remarks, that "the sifting is granted and takes place, but the intercession of the Redeemer stands in the way of the attainment of the accuser's entire demand." The simple idea of the original, and the only one which can be grammatically drawn from it, is, that Satan desired to get possession of the apostles, in order to tempt them from their fidelity to Jesus, and thus effect their ruin. Our Lord's intercessory prayer did not prevent this assault of Satan on Peter's integrity, but only defeated its influence. In regard to the winnowing process here spoken of, some expositors find the figure in the agitating and loosening process, by which their fidelity was attempted to be shaken from its foundation. But this is far less natural and

32 But 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

33 And he said unto him, Lord,

e John 17: 9, 11, 15.  
f Pa. 51: 18; John 21: 15, 16, 17.

pertinent than the usual exposition, which makes this symbolical of separation and overthrow.

32. *But I have prayed, &c.* This was what preserved Peter from a fatal apostasy. The pronoun *I* emphasizes the idea that Jesus had opposed himself in person to the adversary, who was aiming to effect the ruin of his leading disciple. *For thee* concentrates the danger and final deliverance again upon Peter, as the special and repeated address *Simon, Simon*, had done in the first instance, but which had been made by the plural *you*, to include the whole. *That thy faith fail not.* This was the object of the prayer. The design for which Satan wished to get possession of Peter, was to sift him like wheat, and thus effect his downfall. Opposed to this was Christ's all-prevalent intercession, that Peter's faith should remain firm. *Faith* in Christ as the true Messiah, which would be severely tested in the circumstances which were to follow. *Faith* not, i. e. fail not utterly, or become wholly inoperative. Peter's faith was very weak, and came near failing; but He whose look brought him to reflection and repentance, had prayed, and his intercession was more efficacious with God, than the demand of the accuser that Peter should be surrendered wholly into his power. *When thou art converted.* The verb in the original is not passive, as is implied by our common version, but is intransitive, *when thou turnest* to duty, love, and obedience. Luke employs this same verb in an intransitive sense in 17: 4; Acts 26: 18. It is, however, quite well expressed in our English translation, for it was the grace of God in answer to our Saviour's prayer, which brought Peter back with tears of repentance to the fold whence he had strayed away. *Strengthen thy*

I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

34 'And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

g Mat. 26: 34; Ma. 14: 30; John 13: 38.

*brethren.* The boldness and steadfastness which Peter infused into his fellow disciples, by his own courageous conduct, are abundantly shown in the early history of the church. His bitter experience of the danger of self-reliance in a contest, so far beyond his own unaided powers to successfully carry on, threw him, perhaps, more than any other of the apostles, on the protecting arm of his gracious Redeemer, and inspired him with true courage and devotion in his service. Thus what Satan had devised, as a means of obstructing the progress of Christ's kingdom, so far as the instrumentality of Peter in building it up was concerned, became by the overruling power and grace of God the chief means of its successful establishment.

33. Such slight acquaintance had Peter at this time with his own heart, that notwithstanding this solemn warning of Jesus, and the express declaration that the great adversary had claimed him, as one whom he desired to sift as wheat, and that his faith would become utterly extinct, were it not for his Lord's intercessory prayer, he yet persists in loudly and boldly declaring his readiness to accompany his Master through all suffering, even unto death. He doubtless felt all that he said; but had he been less confident in his own strength, and more reliant on that of Christ, his reply would have been in the words with which he sought the aid of his Lord, when he was sinking in the waves, "Lord, save me."

34. What had been previously hinted at by Jesus in regard to Peter's defection, is now openly and emphatically asserted. On the verbal explanations of this passage, see Ns. on Matt. 26: 34; Mark 14: 30. It will be seen by a comparison of John 13: 37; Matt. 26: 33;

35 <sup>a</sup> And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse,

A Mat. 10: 9; ch. 9: 8; & 10: 4

Luke 22: 33, that Peter had professed his zealous adherence to the cause of his Master three times. Our Lord now most solemnly assures him that, on that very night before the morning dawn, he would thrice deny that he knew him. The clause *that thou knowest me*, is found only in Luke, and is added to give definiteness to the form of the denial. That this prediction was literally verified is seen in Matt. 26: 72, 74; Mark 14: 71; Luke 22: 57. In order to clear himself from every suspicion that he belonged to the company of Jesus of Nazareth, he denied again and again that he had any knowledge of the man. The solemn address here made by our Lord to Peter, is introduced in the most emphatic terms, *I say to you, Peter*. In Matthew and Mark, the assertion is introduced by the emphatic *verily I say unto thee*. Although the affirmation was made in such strong and emphatic language, yet such was Peter's presumptive confidence in his own steadfast integrity, that it is quite doubtful whether he laid it to heart, or yielded it a moment's belief. How can this be accounted for? Simply in the imperfect knowledge which Peter had of his own heart, and the enthusiastic ardor and energy of his love, which rendered it in his estimation a moral impossibility, that he should do so base and cowardly an act. He did not sufficiently discriminate between moral and physical courage, the latter of which qualities he possessed to an eminent degree; but of the former of which, as his pusillanimous conduct in the court of the high priest's palace evinced, he had at that time but a very little portion. The words of his Lord he may have attributed, in part at least, to the depression of the hour, which would excite in his mind painful apprehensions of the defection of his followers, and especially of Peter, who was the leading apostle, and to whom the others

and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

would naturally look for an example of courage and constant devotion.

35-38. This passage in which our Lord forewarns his disciples of the approaching conflict, is peculiar to Luke. The general idea is that the circumstances in which they would soon be placed, demanded a different outfit and preparation from that required by them when sent forth on a previous mission. At that time they were directed to cast themselves upon the resources, which would result from the labors of love in which they were engaged. They were to provide nothing beforehand, to take no purse, scrip, or shoes, but to rely for the supply of their wants solely upon the hospitalities of those to whom they were sent with the message of salvation. But now the condition of things was changed. They were to be surrounded with enemies, so that they would be obliged to depend upon their own exertions and prudent forecast for their daily sustenance. They were even to arm themselves for the conflict. This, as we shall see, they entirely misunderstood. What was intended as indicative of a general change in the condition of things, they misinterpreted to signify, that they were to adopt means and put themselves in a posture of immediate defence, and repel by physical resistance any violence which might be offered the company. This accounts for Peter's rash and imprudent act of violence committed upon Malchus (John 18: 10).

35. *When I sent you forth, &c.* Our Lord employs the interrogative form, in order to call their attention more vividly to the fact spoken of. Reference is had to the mission of the Twelve spoken of in 9: 2; Matt. 10: 5; Mark 6: 7. The instructions there given his disciples compared with those he was now to give, showed how altered were the circumstances in which they were now placed. *Without purse, &c.* A reference to 9: 8; Matt. 10: 9, 10;

36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword,

let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be

Mark 6 : 8, 9 will show that in their first mission, the apostles were to make no provision whatever for their wants; but to throw themselves for support upon such friends in every place whither they were to go, as the providence of God might raise up for them. *Lacked ye any thing?* Were not your wants all supplied? When it is borne in mind that the apostles in the mission here referred to, preached a Messiah so different from what the nation expected, and the indispensable necessity of repentance and a change of heart, which implied a state of wickedness and carnal security prevalent throughout the community, and which is adapted to excite at first the rage and hostility of unconverted men, it is not a little remarkable, and shows the superintending providence of God, that their daily wants were so fully supplied by the people, to whom they preached truths so unwelcome to the natural heart. It will be noticed, that nothing is here said about superfluities or a luxurious style of living. It is simply *lacked ye any thing?* Were there any wants not met and supplied? *They said, nothing;* or more literally, *not one.* Their answer was frank and sincere. They had no complaint to make, no reference to their want of this or that article of comfort, no report of the stinted hospitality of any town or village. They had gone forth with no means of support, and yet there was not a single want, which was not fully and timely supplied.

36. If the disciples had flattered themselves, that their mission hereafter would be thus peaceful and free from want and hardship, they were here undeceived. The condition of things had now changed. In every place they would find active, open, and virulent opposition. They could not count upon a friendly and hospitable reception into any house. Instead of an empty purse

or scrip, they were to provide themselves with a well-filled one; and above all, they were to be furnished each, with a sword, even though they were obliged to part with their garment to obtain the means of buying one. The outer garment is here referred to, which, as has been remarked in Note on Matt. 5 : 40, was the one which could least well be spared. But the means of defence were of more importance than clothing for the body. The apostles at the time took this direction, as we shall see, in a literal sense; but they afterwards recognized in it simply a strong intimation of the imminent perils and dangers, to which they would hereafter be exposed in their mission throughout the world. The word *purse* has here the sense of one which is filled with money. *Sword* in the original is constructed with the word *buy*, which leads some to supply the ellipsis and translate thus, *he that hath no (purse), let him sell his garment and buy a sword.* But this is unnatural and contrary to the idiom of the original, which, as has been remarked (Note on v. 29), places the ellipsis of a word belonging in sense to two clauses, in the first, and not in the second member, according to our idiom. Olshausen takes *he that hath not*, in an absolute sense, having no relation to sword, purse, or scrip, but simply as denoting the want of resources. Such also is Stier's view. But Lange has hit the true sense, 'he that is not provided beforehand (with a weapon), let him,' &c.

37. In proof of this announcement of the approach of troublous times, our Lord quotes a prophecy which was now on the eve of fulfilment in himself. *For*, which introduces the verse, is both confirmatory and explanatory. *I say unto you* imparts solemn emphasis to the declaration. *This that is written*, or more in accordance with the emphasis of the original, *this well known*

accomplished in me, 'And he was reckoned among the transgressors : for the things concerning me have an end.

† Isa. 53 : 12; Ma. 15 : 28.

38 And they said, Lord, be-

*prophecy.* The particle *yet* introduces a new scene of sufferings and reproach in the life of the Redeemer. Hitherto as the despised Jesus of Nazareth, he had fulfilled those great prophecies condensed in the expression *he shall be called a Nazarene* (Matt. 2 : 23). Now other prophecies were to be fulfilled relating to his sufferings and death. A change of circumstances is now indicated, which would affect not only him, but all his followers. It was for this object that the citation from the prophets was made, to show that the state of things was to be so changed, as to render necessary the instructions given in v. 36. The prophecy here quoted had not yet been fulfilled, but as it referred to Jesus, its fulfilment was at hand. *In me* as the predicted Messiah. *And he was reckoned, &c.* See Isa. 53 : 12. As Alford remarks, "by the very form of the expression, it is evident that the sword alluded to could have no reference to that night's danger, or the defending Him from it." *He was reckoned among the transgressors* found its fulfilment in his crucifixion with two malefactors. As Barnes well says, "it does not mean that he was a transgressor, or in any way guilty, but that in his death he was in fact numbered with the guilty and put to death with them. In the public estimation, and in the sentence which doomed him to death, he was regarded and treated as if he had been a transgressor." *The things (predicted) concerning me have an end.* This does not refer simply to the fulfilment of the Messianic prophecies; but there was to be a complete and final close to these predictions, and to that end all things were now rapidly tending. His sufferings and death were a part of the Messianic prophecy, and these also were to be fully accomplished. When the prophecy just cited was accomplished, and he was regarded and treated as the vilest criminal, then would the predictions concerning him

come to the end of their fulfilment. Hence, while he stood in need of no sword to defend him from his enemies, it being the divine purpose that he should fall into their power and die the death of a malefactor, yet his disciples were to consult for their own protection and safety. They were not to draw the sword in his, but in their own defence. But was this command to unsheath the sword to be literally obeyed? So it seems the disciples thought, and hence made an examination as to the number of swords in the possession of the company. It is evident that they supposed that it was the intention of our Lord to evoke their aid in defending him from his enemies, which we know from the citation here made, as well as from his reply *it is enough* in v. 38, was in no respect whatever true. If they fell into such a mistake in regard to the defence of their Master, it is not strange that for the time they should have affixed a literal sense to his command, that each should possess himself of a sword. That the sword was allegorically put for prudence and wisdom, by which dangers would be averted or shunned, there can be scarcely a doubt. The disciples were no longer to regard themselves as under that special protection, which guarded and shielded them in their first mission; but henceforth they were to make personal efforts for their preservation, and adopt wise and prudent plans to baffle their enemies, all the while, however, remembering that they were under the protection and care of their Heavenly Father. Physical resistance is neither enjoined nor forbidden in this passage. The simple point is one of contrast between their future mission and that trial-mission in which they had gone forth in comparative safety, and for which they were to make no provision, not even for the slightest of their wants. The great mission before them was one of trial,

hold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

suffering, hardship, persecution, death. In reference to this, they were to be fully prepared. Instead of going forth empty handed, they were to make the same prudent provision for their necessities, which was deemed the part of a wise foresight in other men. They were to take all proper measures to preserve their lives and ward off violence. The sword was the symbol of defence, and in the strong metaphorical language of our Lord, they were to possess themselves of this weapon, even at the cost of their principal garment. Here is a warrant from our Lord for the standing-up of his followers in their own defence, as they often did in those bloody, persecuting wars which desolated some of the fairest portions of Europe. Christianity, however, has no license from this passage to draw the sword for its own propagation. The simple preaching of the gospel is the great instrument of the world's conversion. But on the other hand, Christian communities and Christian nations have their rights, and when these are invaded, a war of defence becomes a duty of sacred obligation.

38. *Here are two swords.* See N. on Matt. 26 : 51. This shows that the disciples attached a literal signification to the words of our Lord. They were blind and deaf to every thing which implied that Jesus would be given up to his enemies; and when this appalling truth found its realization in his apprehension, trial, and death, they were overwhelmed and stupefied at the event. The last thing in their mind at the time when this conversation took place, would have been to permit their Master to be taken without interposing their lives in his defence. Hence we see (v. 50) how promptly the sword was drawn against the band who were sent out to apprehend Jesus. *It is enough*, i. e. these are sufficient. Here is the key to our Saviour's meaning. Had he referred to the arming of themselves with literal swords, *two* would have been scarcely sufficient for the approaching struggle, nor a number appropriate to

the *eleven* men who formed the company of his attendants. The words must therefore be taken in the sense of a gentle rebuke for their want of a quick and correct apprehension as to what he meant. It is as though he had said, 'There is quite enough of such weapons. We are sufficiently armed; it was not to this that I referred.' Dr. Jahn says that the phrase *it is enough*, was employed to express a shade of displeasure at what was said or done. See Deut. 3 : 26. Such is Webster and Wilkinson's explanation, "Enough on this subject; that will do," dismissing the subject for the present, and implying that they misunderstood him, and could not receive what he said. See Mark 14 : 32.

39-46. THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN. *Mount of Olives.* Evening before the sixth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 26 : 30, 36-46; Mark 14 : 26, 32-42; John 18 : 1. Luke is much more concise than Matthew or Mark, especially in regard to his withdrawing thrice by himself to pray. But in respect to the depth of his agony, and its effect upon his physical system in producing the bloody sweat, or sweat which started from the pores of his body like large drops of blood, we are indebted wholly to Luke. The angelic ministration in strengthening our Lord in this hour of his mysterious conflict, is noted only in Luke. As we read therefore the account of this wondrous transaction in Gethsemane, our interest concentrates almost solely upon vs. 43, 44 of Luke, where such emphatic and affecting reference is made to the agony of soul, with which our Lord implored the Father to remove the cup from him. Here commenced the mighty work of human redemption in the vicarious offering of God's Son. All his miracles, instructions, reproofs, warnings, prayers had been preparatory to this final and crowning achievement of his incarnation. Had he faltered here or shrunk from the sacrifice, every thing which he had as yet done would have been of no avail. It was neces-

39 ¶ And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the

z Mat. 26 : 36; Ma. 14 : 32; John 18 : 1  
i Ch. 21 : 37.

nary to the salvation of the world, that he should bare his bosom to the sword of eternal justice, and receive its awful stroke in his own sacred person (Zech. 13 : 7). This he did, but in the depth of his mighty sufferings could not but cry to his Father to remove, if possible, the bitterness of the cup, leaving every thing, however, to His sovereign will and pleasure.

39. *He came out of the city. As he was wont on the preceding days of this week of his passion. To the Mount of Olives.* He did not ascend the mount, but went to Gethsemane at its base, although there are not wanting some expositors, who locate the garden on the ascent. Dr. Thomson (Land and Book, ii. p. 483) expresses his decided convictions that this garden is not the one so called, and which is now in possession of the Latins, and enclosed with a high wall plastered and whitewashed, which was too near the city, and close to the great thoroughfare eastward, that our Lord should have selected it for retirement on that dangerous and dismal night. He is inclined therefore to place the garden in the secluded vale several hundred yards to the north-east of the present Gethsemane, hidden as he hopes forever from the idolatrous intrusion of all sects and denominations. *His disciples also followed him.* It is strange that Kitto should so far have overlooked this, as to write (Daily Bible Illustrations, p. 399), "Most of the disciples seem to have remained at the house with the friendly host, and only three of them, Peter, James, and John, went with Him, and somewhat apart, became witnesses to the mighty struggle of his soul." See Matt. 26 : 36, 37, where it appears that *all* his disciples passed out of the city with him (see also John 18 : 1); and when he came to Gethsemane, he directed them to remain, while he withdrew to some recess in the garden for prayer. Taking with

mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

40 = And when he was at the m Mat. 6 : 13; & 26 : 41; Ma. 14 : 38; v. 44.

him the three disciples above-mentioned, he retired from the main company so far as probably to be out of their sight or hearing. After the hour of his agony was past, and he knew that his enemies, with Judas at their head, were on their way to the garden and near at hand, he probably returned to the disciples whom he had left at the entrance of the garden (Matt. 26 : 46; Mark 14 : 42), and thus was apprehended and bound (John 18 : 12) in the presence of all his disciples. At first they made a show of resistance, but soon, terrified at the consequences of Peter's rash act, or the angry threats of the infuriated rabble, they forsook him and fled away (Matt. 26 : 56; Mark 14 : 50). All this renders it certain that the disciples did not remain in the city, on the night of our Lord's betrayal, as Kitto, probably through inadvertence, has said.

40. *The place.* Luke refers to this place, as though it had been before mentioned by him. It was so frequented a spot, as we find by John 18 : 2, that reference is made to it, as though it had been definitely brought before the mind of the reader. *Unto them,* i. e. his disciples. Three of these, Peter, James, and John, as has been remarked, were chosen, however, to accompany him to the scene of his agony. The rest were directed to remain where they were, and pray for deliverance from temptation. This feature is peculiar to Luke, and brings out a very important fact. Prayer against temptation was not, as we should have gathered from Matthew and Mark, enjoined upon Peter, James, and John alone, but upon all the company. The injunction here given was repeated indeed when our Lord returned from the scene of his conflict, and found the three disciples sleeping; but it was not a duty belonging to or first enjoined upon them alone. All his apostles stood in

place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

41 \*And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be

n Mat. 26 : 89; Ma. 14 : 83.

preëminent need of aid from on high, to resist the temptations of this dark and dreadful hour. What could prevent them from unbelief and open, irreclaimable apostasy, when they saw him bound and led away by his enemies, and all their hopes of the establishment of his Messianic kingdom dashed to the ground? Nothing short of the protecting grace of God in answer to fervent, wrestling prayer could avert this. The injunction then to pray was addressed to all, the danger from which deliverance was to be implored being that to which they were all exposed. *Temptation* here refers then to a disbelief in the Messiahship of Jesus, resulting from the apparent triumph of his enemies, and the hopeless prospect of his reigning as a temporal king in Jerusalem, as they had hitherto hoped and expected he would do. The entering into this temptation is not merely exposedness to its influence, but the yielding to its force, so as to prove recreant to the Lord in this time of trial and suffering. That the temptation here spoken of, was of the nature of that against which our Lord wrestled in agony, is not true; although there have not been wanting expositors of some eminence, who have contended for this view. Our Lord's agony was of such a nature, that it was his alone. Its mystery has never been fathomed by the human mind. It has never been experienced by any of the race of Adam. It was the agony of the God-man, in view of the wrath of a holy God against sin, which he, as the sinner's substitute, was undergoing in his own person, and from which, in the more terrible visitation yet to come while he hung on the cross, his soul was shrinking with horror inconceivable.

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willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, 'not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared 'an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

o John 5 : 80; & 6 : 88. p Mat. 4 : 11.

41. *Was withdrawn.* He retired of his own free will. No violence of removal is here intended. *From them*, i. e. from Peter, James, and John, as we learn from Matthew and Mark. *About a stone's cast.* The ancients very frequently noted short distances by such expressions as a *stone's cast* or *arrow's flight*; and indeed, we have the same usage in our expressions, *within gun shot*; *within a stone's throw*, &c. *Kneeled down* denotes the posture of prayer which he first assumed. As his mental agony increased, we see from Matthew and Mark, that he prostrated himself with his face upon the ground. This may not have been, however, until the second or third occasion, perhaps the latter, when the dreadful agony described by Luke probably took place. See N. on Matt. 26 : 44.

42. *If thou be willing, &c.* The sentence is incomplete in the original, which is literally, *if thou be willing to remove this cup from me.* This is, however, the natural expression of intense agony, the words 'I pray thee to do thus' being left to be supplied. This elliptical form of speech, resulting from the strong feelings of the speaker, and which grammarians call *aposiopesis*, is found also in 19 : 42, on which see Note.

43. This verse is commented upon in my Note on Matt. 26 : 44, to which the reader is referred. Alford thinks that this angelic strengthening took place between the first and second prayer; but I am still of the opinion expressed in my Note on Matthew, that it was while he was praying the third time, that his agony had attained its height, and his sinking frame was sustained and strengthened by this angelic ministration. Olshausen thinks that what is here attributed to an angel was a merely



44 'And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his  
g John 12 : 27; He. 5 : 7.

inward spiritual accession of strength from above. But the sense clearly lies upon the face of the passage, that an angel did in reality appear to him, being divinely commissioned to strengthen him, as angels were sent to minister unto him after the temptation in the desert. See Matt. 4 : 11. *From heaven*, i. e. descending from heaven.

44. This verse involves one of the most awful and mysterious truths to be found in God's word. That the Eternal Son of God should become incarnate, and stoop to the lowest condition of humanity for this world's redemption, is an infinite mystery. But that he should be visited with such intense agony of soul, as to cause him to lie upon the cold and rugged earth in the dark hour of midnight, and pour out his soul to God in such heart-rending tones of anguish, sweating in his extreme distress, as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground—this, this is the great mystery of redeeming love, which the intellect of angels and the ages of eternity will not suffice to fathom. How cold, and puerile, and false are all those theories, which would sink the awful grandeur of this scene to the mere trial of our Lord's obedience, by the vivid sense which he had at this lonely hour of the horrible death of the cross which was awaiting him. Such theorists seem to forget, that in the whole scene of suffering from his apprehension in the garden, to his expiring cry on the cross, not a complaint or groan in reference to his bodily sufferings escaped him. But yet there was a cry of anguish—loud above the jeering taunts of the infuriated rabble who surrounded his cross. It was the wail of a soul bowed down beneath the weight of the sins of the world, and crying in the extremity of mental suffering, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?* This was not wrung from him by the pains of the cross; but was indicative of agony, in comparison with which bodily suffering was of no account.

sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

The solution of this mysterious suffering is only found in the doctrine of Christ's vicarious sacrifice, so plainly and forcibly predicted in Isa. 53 : 5; and which is so fundamental and essential a truth in the economy of human redemption, that if taken away, there would be nothing left upon which the soul of man could repose its hopes of salvation.

*More earnestly.* This is derived from a verb signifying to *stretch out*, to *strain*, referring to the high tension of the nerves and muscles in extreme suffering. The physical frame of Jesus was now in full sympathy with his mental distress; and the sweat began to start forth and fall to the ground, like great drops or clots of blood. Vast pains have been taken to prove from medical records, the phenomenon of bloody sweat in times of great mental excitement. But no well authenticated case of this kind has been shown ever to have existed. What Aristotle says of *bloody sweat*, may have been based on this very resemblance of the thick clammy nature of the sweat to clots of blood, rather than that it was composed in part of blood. The same may be true of the citation from Galen, that sometimes the pores are so dilated from great mental fervor or pressure, that even blood issues from them, and then happens a bloody sweat. That such a physiological fact might take place in weak or diseased persons, is not remarkable, and to such Galen undoubtedly refers; but it must be remembered that our Lord was in the enjoyment of full and perfect health. A case of a man at Lyons is recorded, from whom when sentenced to death, a bloody sweat started forth. But this, as well as the reputed bloody sweat of Charles IX. of France on his death-bed, rests on very feeble testimony. It is not safe or proper on such slightly supported authority to affix to the passage before us, a meaning which seems at least to be contrary to the literal interpretation of the passage, "and

his sweat was *as if were* great drops of blood falling down to the ground." It is the desire to improve on the original record, which has induced many modern interpreters to refer this sweat to real blood. The early Fathers, with hardly an exception, took the record as literal, that the sweat was of such thick and clammy subsistence, that it resembled large drops or clots of blood. Is not such a sweat in the open air, on a night so cold that in the hall of the palace of the high priest, a fire was kindled to keep the officers and servants warm (John 18 : 18), a thing remarkable enough, without the accessory of a *bloody* sweat, which must pre-suppose a miracle, or a physical phenomenon which has not elsewhere a well authenticated occurrence in the whole history of medical science? The simple idea, which meets the exegetical and æsthetic wants of the passage is that great drops of sweat exuded from his person and fell down from him, just as blood would trickle down from a wound, and fall in large drops to the earth. This appears the more true from the Greek particle of comparison, translated in our version *as if were*, but which literally signifies, *as if, as though, like, just as*, referring to a simple likeness or comparison, and implying an ellipsis, *as if* (it had been) *drops of blood, &c.* This was the reason why our translators with their usual scholarly accuracy, rendered it *as it were*, the verb being implied in the form of comparison made use of in the original.

Alford, in opposition to this view that the sweat fell like drops of blood, but was not of itself blood or bloody, inquires, why it did not fall down like drops of anything else? Simply because blood flows down in larger drops, than water or any other thinner fluid. The comparison is natural, forcible, and well understood, everybody being conversant with the appearance of blood, as it starts forth and trickles down from a wound, and capable of appreciating the awful degree of mental agony, which, on so cold a night and on the bare ground, would force such large and profuse perspiration from the pores

of the body of Jesus. Similar to Alford's objection to this interpretation is that of Bengel, "if the sweat had not been *bloody* the mention of blood might have been omitted, for the word *drops* would have been sufficient." But the form and clammy consistency of drops of blood are quite different, as has been remarked, from drops of other fluids; and hence the comparison of the sweat of anguish which covered and trickled down the body of our Lord, was rendered more forcible and impressive, by the term, *drops of blood*, than though it had been simply *drops*. The true exposition of this wonderful sweat is given by Prof. Stuart (Bib. Repos. Second Series, vol. i. p. 77), "I understand by this, that the agony of Jesus was such as to force from his body a copious and viscous perspiration, which fell down in conglomerated drops, like blood, to the earth; an occurrence perfectly within the pale of common physiology." This able and judicious expositor goes on to say that "even if this sweat was discolored and of a reddish hue, there is nothing very strange in the occurrence. But the words of the Evangelist do not at all oblige us to suppose this." Such also is Prof. Ripley's well-expressed view, "not that blood actually flowed from the pores of his body; but his perspiration was most profuse; it was more like bleeding, such was its quantity, than like ordinary sweat. In a somewhat similar manner, when describing excessive grief, we sometimes speak of *tears of blood*." Notes on Matt. 26 : 45. In like manner, Kitto (Daily Bib. Illust. p. 399, Carter's Edit.): "It was here that He endured, shaded by the overhanging olives from the pale light of the moon, that great agony, which in the chilly night wrung from his brow the perspiration that fell 'like great drops of blood' to the ground, meaning, probably, not that the perspiration was blood, but that it gathered and fell in great clammy drops like those of blood." So Olshausen: "In relation to real drops of blood, *as if* would be altogether out of place. But the point of comparison is two-fold; first, that the sweat of Christ assumed the form of

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47 And while he yet spake,

† V. 40.

drops, which supposes a high degree of agony; and then, that these drops through their largeness and weight, loosened themselves and fell to the earth."

The mistaken exposition which I have taken some pains to refute, has resulted in part from the commonness of the expression, *bloody sweat*—found in devotional hymns and treatises, and employed in religious exhortations, so that it seems like laying sacrilegious hand on some great religious truth to reject it; and in part, as has been intimated, from the natural tendency to make the original still more striking and impressive, than with all its awful and unfathomable import they deem it to be, if the bloody sweat is left out of the scene of suffering. But it needs no rhetorical embellishment, or intensifying appendage, to make it one of the most awfully impressive passages to be found within the compass of God's Word.

45. *Rose up* from his incumbent position. *Sleeping for sorrow*. See N. on Matt. 26:40. This extenuating circumstance is peculiar to Luke.

46. *Why sleep ye?* Is this an hour for repose, when all the powers of hell are seeking to thwart the work of human redemption? *Rise* from your sleepy recumbent posture. *Pray, lest ye enter into temptation*; literally, *pray in order that ye may not enter*, &c. Prayer was their only safeguard at this awful crisis. If they neglected this means of defence against the adversary, they were lost. Hence, when our Lord returned from the first occasion of prayer, he enjoined this duty most urgently upon them. See Matt. 26:41; Mark 14:38. Doubtless it was repeat-

'behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

‡ Matt. 26:47; Ma. 14:48; John 18:3.

ed, when he came to them the second time, for Mark (v. 40) says, "neither wist they what to answer him," which implies that he had addressed to them this or a similar note of warning.

47-53. JESUS BETRAYED AND MADE PRISONER. *Mount of Olives*. Night introducing the sixth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 26:47-56; Mark 14:43-52. Luke is here more concise than Matthew and Mark, although in v. 48, he introduces that most affecting question of Jesus to Judas, "Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss," which it might have been thought would even then have brought him to repentance for the dreadful deed of treachery, which he had committed. John (18:4-9) has introduced several incidents in the scene of our Lord's arrest by this motley rabble, acting however under legal authority, which should be carefully read to obtain a full and connected view of the order of events. Indeed the whole account of the trial and crucifixion, should be read in the order and connection made out by a comparison of the Evangelists in a good English Harmony.

47. *He that was called Judas*, i. e. whose name was Judas. *Went before them*, in order to point out to the multitude the one whom they were to apprehend, by the preconcerted sign (see Matt. 26:48).

48. This verse, as has been remarked, is found only in Luke. The kiss of Judas is here placed in strong contrast with the betrayal which it subserved, in order to show how devoid of all noble and generous feelings was the traitor, who could prostitute to so vile a purpose, that which among all nations was

49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 And 'one of them smote the  
† Mat. 26: 51; Ma. 14: 47; John 18: 10.

regarded as the pledge and token of intimate friendship. Had not his heart been steeled to every appeal of love, this allusion to the friendly relations which had existed between them, would have melted him to repentance even at the very moment of the consummation of his deed of treachery.

49. *They which were about him.* After the hour of agony had passed, Jesus with the three disciples whom he had chosen to accompany him (Matt. 26: 37; Mark 14: 33), returned to the body of the disciples, whom he had left on his entrance into the garden, with directions to pray for deliverance from temptation. Almost immediately after he had rejoined them, the band sent to take him, with Judas at their head, and probably a little in advance of the main body, was descried approaching in the distance. As they drew near, Judas approached our Lord and gave him the ordinary kiss of salutation. Stung by the words of Jesus (v. 48), and aware that his black treachery was well understood, he seems to have fallen back again to his band (see John 18: 5); so that when they came to Jesus, they were somewhat at loss to identify him (see John 18: 4-9). This shows that Judas so cowered beneath the searching glance and calm, severs language of Jesus, that he retreated from his side, where he had probably intended to remain until the band came fully up, in order that there might be no possible mistake in regard to the apprehension of the right person. Had not our Lord frankly and explicitly avowed twice, that he was Jesus of Nazareth, the company would have been at loss whom to have apprehended, so completely did the actions of Judas seem to have been paralyzed by the words of our Lord. *Saw what would*

servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

52 "Then Jesus said unto the  
u Mat. 26: 55; Ma. 14: 48.

*follow*, i. e. that Jesus was about to be seized and led away. *Shall we smite, &c.* This evinces their misunderstanding of his direction in v. 36. So courageous and regardless of the consequences of rashness were they, that they stood ready against such fearful odds and with only two swords, to fight for their Master. Their forward zeal did not permit them to wait, as they should have done, his command; but one of them rushed forward and smote and wounded the servant of the high priest, who was probably one of the foremost of the gang to lay hands on Jesus, to bind and lead him away. Our Lord having touched and healed the wounded man (v. 51), bid Peter (for he it was who had done this rash and useless act, John 18: 10, 11) to return his sword to its sheath, and fully disabused his disciples of the false interpretation, which they had put upon his words in v. 36. For the more verbal comments on this incident see N. on Matt. 26: 52.

51. This is supposed to have been addressed to those who were holding Jesus. *Suffer ye thus far*, i. e. permit me to have the use of my hand to touch the ear of the wounded man. They had previously laid hands on Jesus (see Matt. 26: 50; Mark 14: 46), in order to bind and lead him away prisoner. Webster and Wilkinson take the words in this sense: 'Suffer my disciples thus far to show their attachment to me; excuse it to this extent; they shall do nothing more of this kind.' Trollope supposes the word to be addressed to his disciples, *enough of this*, our Lord intending to place a mild check upon the zealous interference of his followers. *And he touched his ear; literally, and having touched his ear, &c.* Luke alone records this miracle.

52. *Chief priests and captains of the*

chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, *Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves?*

53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: "but this  

 y John 12: 37.

*temple.* These were the leaders of the multitudes, whom Jesus in Matt. 26: 55, is said to have addressed. *Be ye come out (against me) as against a thief,* i. e. for the apprehension of a thief. The clause *with swords and staves*, is to be constructed with *be ye come out*. These words are those of honest indignation, that a man of his acknowledged peaceful habits should be proceeded against with an array of weapons of all sorts, as though he were a robber, to be hunted down and captured like a wild beast. *Staves*; literally, *wood*, i. e. all kinds of sticks and cudgels. They were a motley gang, priests, captains of the temple, elders, mingled with the lowest rabble, who then as now were at all times ready, with such weapons as they could lay their hands upon, to engage in any enterprise which promised excitement and danger.

53. *Ye stretched forth no hands against me.* They refrained from violence, not through want of an eager desire to take Jesus, but because it was not permitted them of God. This is implied in the following words, *this is your hour*, &c. It was now permitted of God, that incited by the powers of evil, they should vent their rage against Jesus, and for a time triumph in the apparent success of their plans to crush both him and his followers. It is a very low and inadequate view, to refer the hour here spoken of to the hour of *night*, as most opportune to arrest Jesus. We would not object to the idea of an allusion to the hour of midnight, as an appropriate time for their deeds of violence and darkness. *And (the hour) of the power of darkness*, i. e. the power of the prince of darkness, Satan. In John

is your hour, and the power of darkness.

54 ¶ Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

55 And when they had kin-  

 y Mat. 26: 57.    s Mat. 26: 58; John 18: 15.  
 a Mat. 26: 69; Ma. 14: 66; John 18: 17, 18.

14: 30, he is called the "prince of this world." This was the time of his momentary triumph (Webster and Wilkinson), but his tremendous and final ruin (see 10: 18) was not arrested thereby, but only rendered more dreadful and certain. He was now to bruise the heel of the Seed of the woman, but in return would be crushed and rendered incapable of all further inroad upon the stability and happiness of God's moral universe. "The moment in which the Holy One of God could by the sin of men be brought to the cross, was the culminating point of evil generally. But in reaching that, it destroyed itself, and thus revealed its own nothingness, since the murder of the Just One expiated the sins of the whole world." Olshausen.

54. See Na. on Matt. 26: 57; Mark 14: 53, 54. *Then took they him*; literally, *having taken him*, i. e. having apprehended him. *And led*; literally, *they led him away from the garden. High priest's house*, i. e. the palace of Annas (John 18: 13). Afterward he was conducted to the hall of Caiaphas.

55-62. PETER THRICE DENIES HIS LORD. *Jerusalem.* Night introducing the sixth day of the Week. For full comments on this passage, and a reconciliation of the apparent discrepancies, see Na. on Matt. 26: 58, 69-75; Mark 14: 54, 66-72. See also Na. on John 18: 15-17, 25-27. Luke is more brief than the other Evangelists, but introduces a feature in v. 61, than which there is not one more impressive or suggestive of thought in the whole transaction.

55. *When they had kindled a fire*; literally, *they having kindled a fire*. It

dled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 ' And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou

b Mat. 26: 71; Ma. 14: 69; John 18: 23.

was a charcoal fire. See John 18: 18. *In the midst of the hall*, i. e. in the open court, around which were the apartments of the palace. Mark implies this fire in vs. 54, 67. Matthew omits its mention altogether.

56. *As he sat by the fire*; literally, *by the light or blaze*, a form of expression often employed in the Greek classics for *fire*. *Earnestly looked upon him*. In Mark, simply *looked upon*. She seems to have attentively regarded him, in order to recall his features, if she had seen him before. *This man*, &c. She spoke this to the bystanders. Afterwards she approached Peter (Matthew v. 69), and charged him in plain terms with belonging to the company of Jesus (Mark v. 67).

58. This verse finds its parallel in Matt. v. 71 and Mark v. 68 (end). *Another* is masculine, referring probably to some male attendant to whom the maid had communicated her suspicions, and who charged Peter directly with having belonged to the company of Jesus. This harmonizes Luke's statement with that of Matthew (v. 71), and Mark (v. 60), who say that the maid saw him, and reported to them that stood by that he was of the party of Jesus. See N. on Matt. 26: 71.

59. *About the space of one hour after*; Matthew, *after a while*; Mark, *a little while after*. Luke's report is the more definite, and is of importance as throwing light on the presence of Peter again within the hall. He remained out of general observation some time, and

art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 'And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with him; for he is a Galilean.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

c Mat. 26: 73; Ma. 14: 70; John 18: 26.

then impelled by his love and zeal for his Master, even while through abject fear he was thus denying him, he passes again into the inner court, where he had been first recognized by the maid-servant, and where he could see Jesus, and learn what was to be his fate at the hands of his enemies. *Another confidently affirmed*. The tense in the original gives this idea, *affirmed again and again in the strongest terms*. It was this oft-repeated charge which so irritated and alarmed Peter, that giving way to his naturally quick and vehement temper, he began to curse and swear that he knew not the man. *This fellow*. This was spoken to those who stood by. In Matthew and Mark, he charged this directly upon Peter. The direct and open charge was probably preceded by intimations made to those who stood by, of his knowledge of Peter.

60. *Man*. An expression of surprise and indignation. *What thou sayest*, i. e. what is the meaning of your words. Luke and John omit all reference to his profanity. Matthew and Mark, however, in almost the same language, affirm this; and strange as it may appear that he would use such profanity in the hearing of his Lord, it is put beyond a doubt by the testimony of these two Evangelists. *While he yet spake*. In the very midst of his loud and vehement denials of all knowledge of Jesus, and while he was invoking God's curses on his head, if what he said was not true (see N. on Matt. 26: 74), the cock crew.

61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. 'And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him,

*d Mat. 26: 75; Ma. 14: 72.*

61. At that sound, which reminded him of the words of his Master the preceding evening, that the cock should not crow twice before that he should thrice deny that he knew him, Peter could not refrain from casting his eye upon his Master, whom he had so basely denied. In doing this, he met the look of Jesus, so mild, sorrowful, affectionate, and penetrating, that it reached his heart, and awakened him to a full sense of the awful sin which he had committed. It was a token to him of the faithfulness of his Lord; and while it brought to vivid remembrance the prediction of his dreadful fall, it also reminded him, that his Master had prayed for him, that his defection might not prove fatal. It was the remembrance of this promise, as well as the warning words of Jesus, which preserved him from the despair and dreadful end of Judas, and awakened in him true and lasting repentance for his sin. This incident, which is found only in Luke, shows that in the midst of his enemies, and with death in its most frightful form staring him in the face, our Lord was not unmindful of his chosen disciples, and especially of that erring one, of whose deep and abiding love he could have no question, but who so far yielded to his fears as to deny with oaths in his very hearing and presence, that he had ever known him. He *looked upon him*. He could not stretch forth his hands, manacled as he was, to save him, as upon a former occasion, when sinking in the billows he cried, "Lord, save me." But he gave him one look of love, which brought him to see that he was sinking in a far more tremendous abyss than the depths of the sea of Galilee, and that there was infinitely greater necessity that he should now implore the unseen hand of his Redeemer to be put forth to rescue him from the destruction which

'Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

*e Mat. 26: 34, 75; John 13: 38.*

was yawning to receive him. With what incomparable simplicity does the Evangelist proceed to say, "And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." When first warned by his Lord, in his vain self-confidence he gave it no weight. He thrust it from his thoughts as something unworthy of a moment's consideration, so sure was he that he would never be guilty of such defection from his beloved Master. But now he recalls it word for word. He wonders that he should have been so heedless of this solemn and repeated warning. It adds to his sense of ill-desert, that he could have treated so lightly a prediction from lips, which he had never known to speak what was unfounded or untrue. He remembers all these things, and how through his cowardice, he had verified the prediction of his lapse to the very letter, *and he went out and wept bitterly*. He could no longer endure the look of love and compassion, cast upon him by his denied Lord and Master. He seeks a place of solitude, and there, with self-reproach and tears of penitence, implores the pardon of his great sin. That he received it full and free, and that his confidence of his restoration to the favor of his Lord, was firm and unclouded, appears from the angelic message, "go tell his disciples and *Peter*;" as well as from the high position which he took as a leader in the affairs of the infant church, and the bold and uncompromising spirit, with which on every occasion he testified his love for his dear Redeemer. See N. on Matt. 26: 75. For the description of this open court of the high priest's palace, by which it may be seen how Jesus could both hear and see Peter in the hour of his fall, the reader is referred to my Note on Matt. 26: 57.

63-71. JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS AND

63 'And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him.

64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?

65 And many other things

*f* Mat. 26 : 67, 68; Ma. 14 : 65.

THE SANHEDRIM. *Jerusalem.* Morning of the sixth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 26 : 59-68; Mark 14 : 55-65.

63-65. These verses are to be read after v. 71. They are placed out of their natural order by Luke, since they most unquestionably refer to what took place, after the second and more formal trial of our Lord before the Sanhedrim, and are parallel with Matt. 26 : 67, 68; Mark 14 : 65. There is such a verbal agreement here between the Evangelists, that the reader is referred to my Notes on Matt. 26 : 67, 68, for all the necessary explanations.

65. This verse is peculiar to Luke, and shows that their hatred found vent not only in acts of wanton violence and insult, but in the most opprobrious language. They had just pronounced condemnation on him for blasphemy. But in reviling him who was God's own Son, they were the ones who spake blasphemous words, and that too of the most appalling nature.

66. Luke here introduces the second examination before the Sanhedrim. He is altogether silent in regard to the previous or preliminary one, during which the several denials of Peter took place. This second or principal examination of Jesus before the Sanhedrim took place at the early dawn, and is therefore consistent with what Matthew says in 27 : 1, where reference is had to a consultation, how they might most safely and surely effect his death, which they had previously decreed. See N. on Matt. 27 : 1. There were then three stages or processes of proceedings against Jesus. 1. The preliminary examination, which probably took place

blasphemously spake they against him.

66 'And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,

67 'Art thou the Christ? tell

*g* Mat. 27 : 1. *A* Ac. 4 : 26; see Ac. 22 : 5.  
*f* Mat. 26 : 68; Ma. 14 : 61.

while the full Sanhedrim was assembling (Matt. 26 : 57; Mark 14 : 53; Luke 22 : 54; John 18 : 13, 19-24). 2. The trial before the Sanhedrim (Matt. 26 : 59-68; Mark 14 : 55-65). 3. The subsequent consultation as to the best method of effecting the death of Jesus (Matt. 27 : 1; Mark 15 : 1). What is said in Luke 23 : 1-5; John 18 : 28, of his being led to Pilate, followed close upon this secret consultation; and the result of the plan there determined upon, to give him up to the Roman governor, on the false accusation that he was a seditious person worthy of death. *As soon as it was day.* "According to the Talmud, capital causes were not to be tried during the night; a sentence, too, could not be executed on the same day that it was pronounced. These rules were flagrantly violated in this case." Webster and Wilkinson. *The elders, the presbyterium or presbytery.* Luke alone of the Evangelists gives this name to the Sanhedrim. See Acts 22 : 5. *Chief priests and scribes* are in apposition with *elders* or *presbyterium*, denoting the classes of which it was composed. Besides the priests and scribes, there were other members of this great council, such as Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea. *Council*, i. e. the place where the Sanhedrim held their session, and were now assembled to sit in judgment upon him.

67. *Art thou the Christ?* This question follows immediately upon Matt. 26 : 59-62; Mark 14 : 55-60, where we find related the desperate efforts made by the Sanhedrim to convict Jesus on false testimony; after which, as though the testimony were full and satisfac-



us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe :

68 And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go.

69 ' Hereafter shall the Son of  
 & Mat. 26 : 64 ; Ma. 14 : 62 ; Lk. 1 : 3 ; & 8 : 1.

tory, the high priest arose and asked Jesus, why he preserved silence under such overwhelming evidence of his guilt. " Answerest thou nothing ? What is it which these witness against thee ? " (See N. on Matt. 26 : 62.) To this Jesus made no reply ; whereupon the high priest, as we are informed in this verse, where Luke takes up the narration, continued his interrogatories, and asked Jesus in plain terms whether he was the Christ. *Tell us*. The intimation is that Jesus had practised evasion, and aimed to be acknowledged as the Messiah by his followers, without daring to avow openly and publicly his claims to that high office. Now the high priest pretends to wish no more concealment and subterfuge. ' *Tell us* in so many words whether you are the Christ. Let us know precisely what are your claims as a religious teacher.' *If I tell you*, &c. Our Lord here avers his knowledge of the intent of their inquiries, which was not to elicit truth and bow to its supremacy, but to find means to accuse him. They had failed to obtain enough from their suborned witnesses to convict Jesus ; and now, after their old fashion, they begin to press him with ensnaring questions, in order to find some ground of conviction from what should fall from his own lips. The object of the present question was very palpable. If he denied that he was the Christ, they would accuse him to the people of having raised their hopes and expectations by claiming to be the Messiah, which personage, when put on trial, he disavowed himself to be. But if on the other hand he should declare himself to be the Messiah, they were ready to charge him, as they really did, with blasphemy, and to adjudge him worthy of death.

68. *If I also ask you*, i. e. if I pro-

man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God ? And he said unto them, ' Ye say that I am.

& Mat. 26 : 64 ; Ma. 14 : 62.

pose to you questions by which my innocence might be proved, and my true character and mission vindicated, you would make no reply or ingenuous acknowledgment of your error. A notable instance of this was the question in 20 : 4, which question, had they replied to it with fairness and candor, would have established his claims to the Messiahship ; so openly and unequivocally, had he been attested to by John. In view of his past relations to these wicked and designing men, he avers that nothing could be said to divert them from their determination to effect his death.

69. Although nothing which Jesus could say would change their bloody purpose, yet he deemed it proper to reply to their questions. This would leave them without any show of apology, on the ground that they could obtain from his lips no express declaration, as to his divine character and mission. On the verbal interpretation of this passage, see N. on Matt. 26 : 64 ; Mark 14 : 62. What is in Matthew and Mark *right hand of power*, is in Luke *right hand of the power of God*. This renders plain the meaning of the expression as found in Matthew and Mark.

70. *Art thou then the Son of God ?* This question seems to synchronize with the one referred to in Matthew 26 : 68 ; Mark 14 : 61. If so, we must regard the words in v. 69, as spoken after this second question. There is no objection, however, to the supposition that this second question was asked between vs. 64 and 65 in Matthew, and vs. 62 and 63 in Mark. Whatever may be the arrangement, and whether we are to regard the two questions in Luke as combined in the one proposed in Matthew and Mark,

71 \* And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

*m* Mat. 26 : 65 ; *Ma* 14 : 63.  
*a* Mat. 27 : 2 ; *Ma* 15 : 1 ; *John* 18 : 28.

and which, from the fulness and emphasis in which it is noted, might well be a compendious form for several distinct questions of the same general purport; or whether Luke's twofold question is after all but one, v. 69 being anticipated and removed from its natural position after the words, "Ye say that I am" (v. 71), yet one thing is very clear, that it was the relation of *Son of God* which he expressly claimed to be his, which threw them into such a frenzy of excitement, that without further inquiry, they adjudged him to have committed the sin of blasphemy, and to be worthy of death. *Art thou then, &c.* On the supposition that v. 69 is in its proper place, this shows that they regarded the words which he had just used, as synonymous with the declaration that he was the Messiah.

71. *Ye say that I am.* A Hebraistic form of affirmation. See N. on Matt. 26 : 64. *What need we any further witnesses?* Literally, *what further need have we of testimony?* Luke makes no express mention of the false witnesses, by whose testimony they had sought to convict Jesus. But the word *further*, implies that they had been seeking for testimony of this sort, and had made use of it, so far as they thought it would answer their nefarious purpose. *We ourselves*, as opposed to what has been reported from other sources. *Have heard of his own mouth* his blasphemous utterances. Now follows the scene of mockery, and insult, detailed in vs. 63-65; Matt. 26 : 67, 68; Mark 14 : 65. This was doubtless continued to a greater or less degree, until the moment he was led away to Pilate. If the reader will reflect upon the labors of our Lord on the preceding day, the great demand made upon his strength by the scenes and instructions of the last Supper, his agony in Gethsemane, and his

## CHAPTER XXIII.

AND \* the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.

2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fel-

subsequent trial and mockings at the high priest's palace, and all this without one moment of sleep during the whole night, he will see in what a weak and exhausted condition Jesus entered upon the sufferings yet to be undergone at Pilate's bar, before he was nailed to the cross on Calvary. No rest was given him from the time of his apprehension in the garden, until the moment of his death. Every legal form of cruelty attending death upon the cross, such as the previous scourging, which was generally so severe as to almost of itself produce death, and the being compelled to bear to the place of crucifixion the heavy beam of the cross, was practised upon Jesus, and much that was extra-judicial, such as the crown of thorns, smitten into his forehead so as to defile his sacred face with blood, and the blows with the hand given him in wanton cruelty (John 19 : 3)—all these additional forms of suffering he endured for the sins of men. "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we were healed."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

1-5. JESUS IS LED TO THE BAR OF PILATE. *Jerusalem.* Sixth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 27 : 1, 2, 11-14; Mark 15 : 1-5; John 18 : 28-38. Here John's account is much the fullest, and should be read as forming the principal basis of the narration, the other Evangelists furnishing corroborative testimony, and sometimes introducing incidents not found in John.

1. *Arose* from the deliberation as to the best means of effecting his death, and which followed the decree of the Sanhedrim that he was worthy of death. See N. on 22 : 66. *Led him unto Pilate.* See N. on Matt. 27 : 2.

2. *We found this fellow, &c.* This verse is peculiar to Luke, and is valuable

low 'perverting the nation, and' forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying 'that he himself is Christ a king.

3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the

b Ac. 17: 7. c See Mat. 17: 27; & 22: 21; Ma. 12: 17. d John 19: 12. e Mat. 27: 11; 1 Ti. 6: 13.

as recording the false charge, which they brought against Jesus in regard to paying tribute to Cesar. They begin by saying, *We found this fellow perverting, &c.*, as though in the excess of their zeal for the interest and honor of the Roman emperor, they had of their own accord instituted an investigation in regard to the seditious teachings of Jesus; whereas, as a matter of fact, in their previous examination of Jesus, they had not touched upon any point affecting his relation to Roman law. They had not convicted him, therefore, of doing any such thing as that whereof they now seek to accuse him. They craftily allege this, however, it being a part of their hellish plan adopted in secret conclave, to effect his death by accusing him of seditious designs against the Roman government. There is hardly a doubt but that their strange and unwarranted zeal for the rights of the Roman Cesar, did in its very excess overleap the mark, and betray to Pilate that they had other motives in accusing Jesus, than the mere desire of bringing him to justice as a seditious person. *Perverting the nation*, i. e. turning the people away from their allegiance to the Romans. This general charge is sought to be supported by the more specific charge which follows, namely, that Jesus had forbidden the people to pay tribute to the Roman emperor. This was a barefaced and unmitigated falsehood. The very opposite to what they here alleged against him, was explicitly taught by him in 20: 25. *Saying that he himself is Christ a King*. This was true in form, but in the sense in which they designed it to be understood by Pilate, totally false. The implication is that our Lord aspired to temporal au-

Jews? And he answered him and said, *Thou sayest it.*

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, 'I find no fault in this man.

5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the

f 1 Pa. 2: 22.

thority; whereas, on repeated occasions, he utterly disclaimed all connection with secular power, and taught in the most explicit terms, that his kingdom was a spiritual one to be erected in the hearts of men.

3. This inquiry grew out of the charge, which the Jews had just preferred against Jesus. The question is found in the other Evangelists, but Luke's account is necessary to the right understanding of the passage, as he is the only one who narrates the accusation of the Jews that our Lord aspired to royal dignity. The conversation which immediately followed this question of Pilate, is fully given in John 18: 34-38. It is very important to read the Evangelists here with a good harmony of the gospels. *Thou sayest*. See N. on 22: 71.

4, 5. These verses follow Matt. 27: 14; Mark 15: 5. *I find no fault, &c.* Pilate was not so obtuse as to mistake the true ground of the charges, which the priests and rulers had made against Jesus (see Mark 15: 10). His conversation with Jesus had convinced him that he was a religious person, who least of all was aspiring to temporal power. He therefore openly professes that he finds no sufficient ground to justify his proceeding further in the matter. This rendered the Jews *the more fierce*, and they return anew to the charge of sedition, which they had previously made against him. *He stirreth up the people, &c.* Their only hope of effecting his death at the hand of Pilate, lay in their fastening with some show of truth this charge of political sedition upon him. Here we may repeat what has been virtually said in Note on v. 2, that Pilate well knew that had Jesus claimed to be

people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

king, in the sense which his enemies charged upon him, he would never have incurred the enmity of the Sanhedrim. He was therefore well persuaded that Jesus had told him the truth, when he said (John v. 36), that his kingdom was not of this world. The priests and rulers, quick to perceive that Pilate was inclined to believe in the innocence of Jesus, endeavor to fortify their previous charge, by adducing some particulars in regard to his seditious movements. But even here they show their weakness. Their first charge that he stirred up the people, was only a flat reiteration of the words *perverteth the nation*, in v. 3. *Teaching throughout Jewry* was as general a charge as could well be conceived, and besides had no relevance to the point in hand, unless it could be shown that he was teaching seditious doctrines and sowing the seeds of rebellion. But in the third specification, *beginning from Galilee to this place* (i. e. Jerusalem), they hoped to arouse the jealousy of Pilate, inasmuch as Galilee was one of the most turbulent portions of Palestine, and had furnished the Roman governor much trouble. They therefore name that part of the country, as the principal theatre of the seditious movements of Jesus, charging him with beginning there his insurrectionary plans, and coming thence to Jerusalem to take advantage of the multitudes which were gathered together at the passover, to carry his seditious designs into execution. To such pitiful shifts did they resort to secure the condemnation of one, against whom they had no just ground of enmity, and whose only aim had been to reform their bad practices, and lead them from cold formalism and hypocrisy, to the spiritual worship and service of God.

6-12. JESUS BEFORE HEROD. *Jerusalem*. Sixth day of the Week. The narrative of this interesting incident in

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.

the trial of Jesus, is given only by Luke. It is worthy of note, that while Luke omits all mention of the mockery of Jesus by the Roman soldiers related by the other Evangelists (Matt. 26 : 27-30; Mark 15 : 15-19; John 19 : 1-8), he is the only one who recounts the indignities put upon him at the tribunal of Herod. Thus every deficiency is supplied by the gospels taken as a whole, and the history becomes full and complete.

6. *Heard of Galilee*. See the preceding verse. *Whether the man were a Galilean*. This refers to the question of jurisdiction. If Galilee was the place of Jesus' residence, there would seem to be a propriety in referring to Herod the judicial investigation of the charges advanced against Jesus. As it regards the real object in thus waiving his own superior right, as the chief Roman magistrate to decide the case, it must be referred to the timid policy which marked his whole conduct in this trial, and impelled him in the end to a decision against the injustice of which no doubt his soul revolted. He dared not offend the Jews, and run the hazard of the charge of overlooking the interest of Cesar, which they would most likely prefer against him, if he refused to sentence Jesus as they demanded. On the other hand, he could hardly bring himself to so trample on the interests of justice, as to condemn a man of whose innocence he was so fully persuaded, and whose persecution at the hands of such fierce, vindictive men, of whose hypocritical pretensions to great sanctity he was by no means ignorant, had no doubt awakened in his breast an interest in his behalf. As he was fluctuating between these motives of policy and natural justice, between a desire to ingratiate himself with these leading Jews, and at the same time to bring down their pride and arrogance by delivering Jesus from their hand, he hears the word *Galilee* mentioned; and the

7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto 'Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for 'he was desirous to see him of a long

g Ch. 8:1. A Ch. 9:9.

thought at once recurs to him, that he may rid himself of this troublesome affair by referring the adjudication of the case wholly to Herod, on the ground that the person accused belonged to his jurisdiction. The desire to effect a reconciliation with that prince (see v. 12), by paying him the compliment of sending Jesus to him on the ground of jurisdiction, may have had something to do with this affair. This was Herod Antipas, the one who had beheaded John. See N. on Matt. 14:1.

7. *As soon as he knew*, in answer to his inquiry whether Jesus was a Galilean (v. 6). *Belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction*, i. e. belonged to the province under Herod's sway. "Though governors had the right of trying all offences within their own province, it was the regular practice of the Roman law, to remove the prisoner to the governor of the district to which he belonged." Webster and Wilkinson. *He sent him*; literally, *sent him back again*, the expression conforming to the fact which Pilate had just learned, that Jesus was amenable to Herod's tribunal. *Who himself also was at Jerusalem*. He had come up to celebrate the pass-over.

8. *When Herod saw Jesus he was exceeding glad*; more literally, *Herod was exceeding glad at seeing Jesus*. The same form of construction is found in John 20:20. *For he was desirous*, &c. This denotes the reason why he was so glad to obtain a sight of Jesus. See 9:9; Matt. 14:1, 2. *Because he had heard*, &c. His curiosity had been greatly excited by the reports of our Lord's wonderful doings, and he supposed that now he should himself witness some

season, because 'he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and

† Mat. 14:1; Ma. 6:14.

miracle wrought by him. How low and despicable were the views he entertained of the miracle-working power of Jesus, that it was to subserve no other or higher purpose, than to be put forth to gratify the vain curiosity of this wicked prince.

9. *He questioned him*. The reason for this must be sought in the preceding context. He wished to witness a display of our Lord's miraculous power. Being disappointed in this—for we must suppose many things in this interview not related by Luke—he began to question him in many words, hoping thereby to compel him, in justification of his claims to the Messiahship, to perform some miracle. Our Lord, being well acquainted with the unworthy motives of the man, maintained an unbroken silence through the whole interview. Thus Herod, who had hoped that Jesus would administer to his gratification, by the performance of some wonderful deed, did not even hear his voice, or succeed in eliciting from him any act or movement, which indicated his sense of being in the presence of this proud and ambitious prince. The word *answered*, has here the form in the original signifying *answered for himself*, i. e. said not a word in defence, explanation, or self-justification. This shows the tenor of Herod's questions, being of a nature to provoke some self-justifying reply. Many of his questions were doubtless very exasperating and insulting, especially when he succeeded in eliciting no reply from Jesus.

10. *The chief priests and scribes, &c.* Perceiving that his silence was beginning to exasperate Herod, these wick-

scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

11 <sup>2</sup> And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and

2 Is. 53 : 8.

ed men, who were too eager to effect his death to leave him, and hence had accompanied him to Herod's tribunal, seized upon this opportunity to begin their accusations. As Herod was a Jew, they no doubt varied their charges, making the sin of blasphemy the prominent ground of accusation. The word rendered *vehemently*, is derived from a word signifying, *to make the most intense effort*; and has here the force of, *with main strength, to the utmost of their ability*. They feared, perhaps, that if Herod released him, or did not give judgment against him, that he would after all escape from their hand. The same word is employed in 22 : 44.

11, 12. Having failed to draw forth any reply from Jesus, Herod gave him up to his soldiers, to be mocked and insulted. We can hardly doubt that it was done, in part at least, at the instigation of the chief priests and scribes, with whom Herod was ready to curry favor, especially in a way which cost him so little as the mockery of a poor, helpless prisoner. As has been remarked, he was probably angry with our Lord, for maintaining such silence in his presence, and therefore united more readily with his persecutors in making him the subject of derision. *His men of war*, i. e. his guards. *Set him at nought*; literally, *having set him at nought*, i. e. treated him as though he were nobody, or of no consideration. Such is the etymological signification of the verb. *Mocked him*. See N. on Matt. 27 : 29. *Arrayed him, &c.* He was arrayed in these mock robes of royalty, in derision of his having claimed to be a king. *A gorgeous robe*; literally, *a splendid, lustrous robe*. Some think that this was the same robe, in which he was afterwards clad in derision by Pilate's soldiers. But see N. on Matt. 27 : 28. *And sent him again to Pilate*. Not wishing to be outdone in a

mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

12 And the same day 'Pilate

1 Ac. 4 : 27.

complimentary act by Pilate, he waives his claim of jurisdiction over Jesus, and sends him back to the Roman governor, at whose tribunal he had first been arraigned. It was this mutual courtesy which re-established the friendship between Pilate and Herod on this day. *Were made friends together*. Some have strangely attributed the cause of this amity to their common hatred of Jesus. This fact being assumed, it is quite common to hear it applied to the enemies of religion, when, composed of diverse classes and shades of belief, they band together to oppose the progress of truth. But it is an erroneous view of the matter. There is no doubt that the courteous act of Pilate in sending Jesus to be tried before Herod, and the equally courteous return made by the Galilean prince in remanding Jesus to Pilate's judgment-seat, furnished the occasion for their renewal of friendship. But that it was done through enmity to Jesus, is absurd and unfounded. Pilate, so far from wishing to do him injury, made the most strenuous efforts to release him. Herod, too, could not have been slow to discern, that Jesus was innocent of the charges made against him; and while he was willing to lend his aid to insult and mock the prisoner, in order to ingratiate himself in the favor of the priests and rulers, yet was glad to rid himself of further trouble or responsibility by sending him back to Pilate. Neither of these men had any ground of personal enmity against Jesus, and probably knew or cared very little about him, except that Herod had been very curious to see him, especially after his bloody murder of John the Baptist. *They were at enmity, &c.* We have no certain knowledge of the cause of their enmity. Some attribute it to the slaughter of the Galileans referred to in 13 : 1. But it arose more likely from some question of jurisdiction. The

and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.

13 "And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people,

14 Said unto them, "Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people; and,

Mat. 27: 23; Ma. 15: 14; John 18: 38; & 19: 4.    Va. 1, 2.

inferior rulers of the Roman Empire were often embroiled in quarrels with one another, the decision of which was sometimes referred to the emperor himself. That such was the ground of the present enmity, seems to receive confirmation from the influence of the incident here mentioned in healing the breach.

13, 14. On the return of Jesus from Herod, Pilate calls together his accusers, and makes a formal declaration of his innocence. He had previously declared that he found no fault in him (v. 4), but now he hopes to put an end to the matter by a more emphatic denial of his guilt. In order, however, to appease the rage of his enemies, he offers to chastise Jesus, before he set him at liberty (v. 16). But this idea was scouted at by the priests and rulers, and they began with renewed clamor to demand his death (v. 18). *The people*, i. e. those of the common people who had joined with the rulers in demanding the death of Jesus. *Brought this man unto me*, i. e. have accused him unto me. *As one that perverteth*, &c. See N. on v. 2. *Before you*. The examination was open, and the priests and scribes well knew, therefore, the truth of the governor's declaration, that their charges against Jesus were not sustained. *Touching those things whereof ye accuse him*, i. e. that he was a seditious person, fomenting rebellion against the Roman government.

15. *No, nor yet Herod*; literally, but not even Herod, a Jewish ruler, who might be supposed to have more intimate knowledge of the facts alleged

behold, "I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

16 "I will therefore chastise him, and release him.

o V. 4.    p Mat. 27: 26; John 19: 1.

against Jesus, and could not have failed to discover any thing criminal in him, had it existed, *even he* has found no fault in him. *For I sent you to him*. The idea is that Pilate had sent Jesus and his accusers to Herod, for the very purpose of testing the truth of the charges made against him, and to give his accusers the advantage of bringing their cause before a prince who was their own countryman. This is here the avowed and ostensible reason for sending Jesus to Pilate, but the real ground of the procedure, as has been stated, was the desire to rid himself of a troublesome affair. *Is done unto him*. The translation should be *has been done by him*, as reference is manifestly had to Herod's judgment of the innocence of Jesus. Had he found it otherwise, he would assuredly have gratified the Jewish priests and rulers, by condemning Jesus to death. His sending him back to Pilate was therefore a virtual acknowledgment of his innocence, and so Pilate rightly understood it.

16. *I will therefore chastise him*, &c. This was a proposal of the rankest injustice. It hardly deserves to be advanced as an apology, that Pilate hoped by this to satisfy the malicious hatred of the Jews towards Jesus. As a judge, he ought to have remained firm, and carried out the law, which as much forbid that the innocent should be punished, as that the guilty should be suffered to escape unpunished. This weak and unjust concession gave the Jews a great advantage, which they resolutely followed up, until they obtained from this timid and time-serving magistrate the

17 'For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.

18 And 'they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas :

19 Who for a certain sedition

g Mat. 27 : 15; Ma. 15 : 6; John 18 : 39.  
r Ac. 8 : 13.

sentence against Jesus which they desired.

17. *Of necessity.* This habit of releasing a criminal unto the people, was one of such invariable practice and long continuance, that it became a fixed and necessary custom. See Ns. on Matt. 27 : 15; Mark 15 : 6; John 18 : 39. *At the feast* of the passover. See John as above cited.

18. Before this verse we should read Matt. 27 : 16-19; Mark 15 : 7-10; John 18 : 39. It will there appear that the people were incited to demand the release of the murderer Barabbas, by the chief priests and elders. *All at once* ; literally, *the whole multitude together*. *Away with this man* ; literally, *away this* (fellow). See N. on Matt. 26 : 61. The idea is not *away with him* ; let us hear nothing more about him ; we have had enough of him. But it has the pregnant sense, *away with him* to death ; *to the cross with him*. It was an infuriated death-cry, and stands opposed to the merciful release of Barabbas demanded in the next clause.

19. *A certain sedition made in the city.* These insurrections and tumults were of frequent occurrence, and had to be watched against and repressed with great promptness and energy by the Roman authority. The offer to release a prisoner of such a stamp (Matt. 27 : 17) was made in hope that the Jews would demand the release of Jesus rather than that of so vile a ruffian. In this however he was disappointed. The murderer Barabbas was an angel in the estimation of these wicked rulers and priests, compared with Jesus of Nazareth, the object of their deadly resentment.

made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath

20-22. *Willing to release*, i. e. through his desire to release. The word rendered *willing*, expresses the idea of will combined with choice or purpose, and not simply one of mere inclination. *Spake again to them* of the innocence of Jesus, and his willingness to release him after chastising him. In reply to their infuriated cry, that Jesus should be crucified, he expostulates with them (see v. 22) the third time, repeating his persuasion of the innocence of Jesus, and his strong desire to release him. *But they cried* ; literally, *kept crying out* in consequence of the inclination of the governor to release Jesus. *Crucify him, crucify him*. In regard to this horrible punishment, see N. on Matt. 27 : 35. *Why* do you thus insist upon his death? *What evil* ; literally, *for what evil hath he done?* This clause stands as the reason for the interrogation contained in *why*. The inquiry challenges them to bring forward any reason why he should be put to death. This is rendered still more emphatic by Pilate's reiterated and solemn avowment of his entire innocence. *I have found no cause of death in him*, i. e. I have found nothing done by him deserving of capital punishment. The tense of the verb requires the translation, *I found* on examination before I sent him to Herod. This examination took place, when he was first brought before Pilate's tribunal, after the Jews' charge that he was a seditious person (v. 2). See John 18 : 29-38, compared with Matt. 27 : 11-14; Mark 15 : 1-5. Luke is the only one who records the accusation in full, the other Evangelists leaving it to be gathered from Pilate's inquiry, Art thou the King of the Jews? which



he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.

23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified: and the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

would imply the charge that he had plotted to become king, to the detriment of Roman rule. Pilate on investigating this charge, found that Jesus was not a political intriguer, but a religious teacher; and that in no sense affecting the Roman interests had he claimed to be a king. This was the only judicial investigation of the matter; and to this Pilate refers when he says, *I found no cause of death in him*. Once afterwards, when he heard that Jesus had given himself out to be the Son of God, in a state of alarm, he proposed some additional questions, but not in a way of judicial inquiry (see John 7-12). It is important to bear this in mind, that Pilate at the very first examination was satisfied of the innocence of Jesus; and never at all in the whole subsequent proceedings reinvestigated the affair, through doubt as to whether he had made a correct decision. On the contrary, he reiterates his conviction of the innocence of Jesus, and urges upon his accusers, to accept the punishment of flagellation, as the doom of the prisoner instead of the cross. We have read of no instance, where a judge thus repeatedly plead for the life of a criminal arraigned at his bar, and of whose innocence he was so thoroughly convinced. Had Pilate remained firm in the administration of justice, he would have crowned himself with the glory due to a wise, impartial, firm and upright judge. But through weakness, he yielded to the demands of an infuriated populace, and thus covered himself with eternal infamy, as the judicial murderer of the Lord of life and glory. The particular punishment of crucifixion was demanded, because

24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

• Mat. 27 : 26; Ma. 15 : 15; John 19 : 16.

Jesus was accused of treason to Cesar in making himself king. *I will therefore chastise him, &c.* This offer is repeated from v. 16. *Let him go.* The same word in the original which is translated in v. 16, *release him*.

23. *Were instant*; literally, *lay or pressed upon*, *were urgent with loud voices*, i. e. with loud and importunate cries that Jesus should be crucified. *Of them*, i. e. of the rabble. *Of the chief priests*, who not only excited the multitude to demand the death of Jesus, but themselves joined in the infuriated cry. *Prevailed with Pilate* to comply with their wishes. The word implies great and persistent effort, before they could induce the governor to pass sentence upon a man whom he had repeatedly declared to be innocent.

24. *Gave sentence, &c.* Doddridge places this judicial sentence after the renewed efforts of Pilate to effect the release of Jesus, and the mockery of the soldiers, related in Matt. 27 : 27-30; Mark 15 : 15-20; John 19 : 1-5. But the connection in Luke is very close and natural. The sentence was doubtless pronounced immediately after the washing of Pilate's hands, and the awful imprecation related in Matt. 27 : 24, 25. Luke says nothing further about the scourging, than the proposal of Pilate to administer it, as a compromise.

25. The character of Barabbas is repeated from v. 19, in order to give preciseness to the strange fact, that Pilate released at the instance of the people a seditious man and a murderer, and delivered up to them a just and innocent man to be put to a cruel and ignominious death. *Whom they desired to be*

26 ¶ And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

† Mat. 27 : 82; Ma. 15 : 21; see John 19 : 17.

released. *To their will* that he might be put to death.

26. Previously to his being led forth to be crucified, he was scourged and mocked as recorded in Matt. 27 : 26-30; Mark 15 : 15-19; John 19 : 1-3; after which Pilate, hoping that his mangled and bleeding person might excite the pity of his enemies, made one more effort to save him as narrated in John 19 : 4-16. *Led him away* to execution. *They laid hold, &c.* See Ns. on Matt. 27 : 82; Mark 15 : 21. *On him they laid the cross.* Jesus had first borne the cross himself (John 19 : 17), but through exhaustion from his previous want of rest, and the dreadful scourging inflicted upon him, he was probably unable to carry it far, and Simon was compelled, as here related, to help him bear it to the place of execution.

27-32. The affecting incident here related, is found only in Luke. *A great company of people*, such as usually throng together to witness an execution. Some of these were doubtless friends of Jesus. *And of women.* The most of these were probably drawn together from motives of curiosity; but among them we know to have been those noble women who followed him from Galilee, and who were first to visit his sepulchre on the morning of his resurrection. This multitude of females, touched with pity for the sufferings of one whom they believed to be innocent, and some of them remembering the gracious words which proceeded from his lips, broke forth into loud lamentations, which reached the ear

28 But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

29 \* For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

u Mat. 24 : 19; ch. 21 : 23.

of Jesus, as he was bending beneath the weight of the cross.

28. *Turning to them.* As he had now been relieved from the full weight of the cross by Simon (see N. on Matt. 27 : 82), he was enabled to turn partially around as he walked along, so as to address these women. There is no probability that he was permitted to stop for this purpose. *Daughters of Jerusalem.* A Hebraism for persons born and living in Jerusalem, or who resorted to it as the capital of their country. The word *Jerusalem*, in view of the dreadful calamities which were soon to befall it, contained in its bare mention the reason why these women were to withhold their expressions of sorrow for him, and weep rather for themselves and children. Some of them would live to see and experience the indescribable horrors of the siege; and the children of others would participate in those calamities. *For yourselves and for your children* correspond to the terms of the imprecation which the Jews made in Matt. 27 : 25.

29. This verse furnishes the reason why they were to bewail their own fate rather than his. *The days are coming.* Reference is had primarily to the destruction of Jerusalem, when his blood, which the people in such awful terms had imprecated upon themselves and children, would be required at their hands. But in all such predictions of judgments to come, a more fearful doom lies far in the future; when all God's enemies and those of his Son, shall be arraigned at His bar, and receive the award of their impitence

30 'Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

31 'For if they do these things

• Isa. 9: 19; Ho. 10: 8; Ro. 6: 16; & 9: 6.  
y Pr. 11: 31; Ja. 35: 29; Ez. 30: 47; & 21:  
3, 4; 1 Pe. 4: 17.

and unbelief in the righteous retributions of eternity. *They*, i. e. the people living at the time of the calamities here referred to, and who had not averted from themselves God's judgments by timely repentance. The transition from the second to the third person, seems to except from the persons here addressed such as died before the siege of Jerusalem, or who, by faith and obedience to the words of Christ (see Matt. 24: 15-20), escaped from the horrors of that awful event. *Blessed are the barren*. Such intense suffering would characterize those days, that those would be regarded fortunate who had never borne children. These words are rendered more emphatic from the universal dread of barrenness, which was felt by every Jewish female in ancient days. The language seems to have been founded on Isa. 54: 1. "Some see in this an anticipative reference to the woman of noble family, who killed and ate her own child at the siege of Jerusalem." Webster and Wilkinson.

30, 31. Their anxiety, distress, and dread of some more horrible death, would be such, that rather than live in prolonged misery and forebodings of still greater sufferings, they would pray for speedy and certain death under the crushing weight of hills and mountains. Similar language is found in Rev. 6: 16. Both passages may have had their origin in Hos. 10: 8. While immediate reference is had to the destruction of Jerusalem, yet we cannot doubt, that in a higher sense, the great day of God's wrath at the final judgment is referred to. This appears the more clear from the following verse, in which a comparison is evidently instituted between Jesus, the Son of God, suffering for the sins of men, and the finally hardened and impenitent, who, having re-

in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

32 'And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

• Isa. 53: 12; Mat. 27: 38.

jected salvation through his blood, must undergo, in their own persons, the punishment due to their sins. *If they*, the persecutors of Jesus. *In*, i. e. in the case of. *A green tree—a dry*. "The Hebrews called the righteous *green trees*, and the wicked, *dry trees*." Webster and Wilkinson. See Ezek. 20: 47; John 15: 2, 6. The green tree is representative of one which bears fruit; the dry tree, of that which is barren, and fit only to be burned. The expression was doubtless proverbial. Alford says that this verse is the solemn close of our Lord's teaching on earth.

32. *Two others, malefactors*. We are not to construct this as though Luke intended to include Christ with the malefactors. He was, indeed, numbered with the transgressors (Isa. 53: 12; Luke 22: 37); but nowhere is he called a malefactor. The word *malefactors* is therefore to be regarded as in apposition with the word *others*, and may be translated, *two others, who were malefactors*; or simply, *two malefactors*. This pleonastic use of the word *others*, in the enumeration of persons or particulars, is quite common in the Greek classics. The translation and punctuation, *two other malefactors*, is erroneous, conforming neither to the Greek original, nor to the facts of the case. *Led with him*, i. e. conducted by the soldiers to the place of execution. These, in like manner, were compelled to bear their cross, but were doubtless more capable of sustaining the weight than Jesus, who had become exhausted by previous sufferings and want of rest.

33-38. THE CRUCIFIXION. *Jerusalem*. Sixth day of the Week. See Nu. on Matt. 27: 35-44; Mark 15: 24-32. Luke's account of the crucifixion is more brief than that of the other Evangelists, but yet contains all the important features of the transaction.

33 ¶ And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the

a Mat. 27: 33; Ma. 15: 22; John 19: 17, 18.

33. *To the place called Calvary; literally, called a skull.* In the other Evangelists, it is called by the Hebrew word *Golgotha*. See N. on Matt. 27: 33. Luke, who wrote for Gentile Christians, gives it the Greek name *Kranion* (a skull), Latin, *Calvaria*, *Calvary*, as it is rendered in our English version. The very name marks it as the place where criminals were commonly executed, and whose bones and skulls were strewed there. *They crucified him*, i. e. they nailed him to the cross, and erected it in its place. Death did not ensue, usually, until many hours after the criminal was thus affixed to the cross. *And the malefactors, one on the right hand, &c.* See N. on Matt. 27: 38.

34. *Father, forgive them, &c.* This prayer was probably uttered directly after his suspension on the cross. Alford remarks, that now, as his blood was first shed for sin, he inaugurates his intercessional office by a prayer for his murderers. His teaching was now ended, and his high priesthood begun. A question here arises, for whom this prayer was offered. Who were the persons designated by *them*? Webster and Wilkinson aver that the prayer was offered with especial reference to the Roman soldiers. This seems the most obvious application from the connection in which these words stand in Luke. If, as Stier suggests, the prayer was offered while the nails were being driven through his hands and feet, the reference to the soldiers would be very obvious. Of one thing we are certain from the words, *for they know not what they do*; the persons for whom the prayer was offered, were those who were ignorant of the real nature of the act they were performing. This was undoubtedly true of the Roman soldiers. But to limit this sublime, godlike prayer, to these instruments in the bloody tragedy, seems to deprive it of its high

right hand, and the other on the left.

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know

b Mat. 5: 44; Ac. 7: 60; 1 Co. 4: 12. c Ac. 3: 17.

import, and reduce it to such narrow dimensions, that we involuntarily search for some higher and more significant application.

We cannot doubt, that at this time, when he was about to lay down his life for mankind, and when the act of crucifixion had taken place, and he was elevated on the cross, that the whole world of mankind filled his spiritual vision. The whole race were his *crucifiers*. The Roman soldiers were those who executed the deed. But all mankind were represented in that act, and shared by their own personal rebellion against God and his Holy Child Jesus, in the dreadful deed. May we not, then, without presumption, include the whole human family in the scope and merciful design of this great Intercessory prayer? Was it not the breathing forth of that love which "many waters could not quench nor floods drown," for his immediate executioners, and for all whose sins associated them with these actors in the tragedy of the crucifixion of the Saviour of the world? Such I am disposed to regard the full import of the prayer. It was the commencement of that work of intercession, which we are assured (Heb. 7: 25) he ever liveth to make before the throne of his Father.

How far the rulers and priests, the real murderers of our Lord, were included in the terms of this prayer, we cannot say. Paul, in his discourse at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13: 27), seems clearly to assign ignorance as the reason why the rulers desired the crucifixion of Jesus. See also Acts 3: 17; 1 Cor. 2: 8. There were, doubtless, different degrees and shades of guilt in the transaction. With some, the ignorance was wilful, and admitting of no palliation. Such we must believe to have been true of Caiaphas and other leaders in this deed of impiety. But many who composed the Sanhedrim,

not what they do. And 'they  
d Mat. 27: 35; Ma. 15: 24; John 19: 23.

parted his raiment, and cast  
lots.

even of those who voted for his death, were doubtless influenced to do so by the great weight and authority of Calaphas and his immediate abettors and counsellors. They knew not the great sin which they were committing, but perhaps thought that they were doing service for truth in putting Him to death. Paul, who had not seen Jesus in the flesh, but who was doubtless as well informed of the nature and strength of his claims to the Messiahship, from the testimony of those whom he was so bitterly persecuting, as were many of the Sanhedrim, who decreed the death of Jesus, says, in extenuation of his guilt, that "he verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, which thing he also did at Jerusalem" (Acts 26: 9, 10); and that he obtained mercy for his blasphemy, persecution, and injurious acts, because he did it ignorantly through unbelief (1 Tim. 1: 18). This, surely, should warrant our throwing a very broad mantle of charity over many of the actors in the tragedy of the crucifixion, so far, at least, as not to exclude them from the benefit of this heavenly intercessory prayer of Jesus. Their sin was one of awful magnitude, yet not such, we venture to hope, as to place them without the pale of forgiveness, if they applied to Him whom they had crucified for salvation.

We conceive the prayer then to have had special reference to the persons engaged directly and indirectly in his immediate crucifixion; but not so as to preclude its application to the whole world of sinners. Stier well remarks, "This expression uttered in the present, between the past and the future (they know not what they do), embraces assuredly all sin of all sinners which is seized in its central manifestation in the crucifixion of the Son of God: the sins which preceded this intercession and the sins which followed it. The intercession looks back upon all that had brought them to the point of cru-

cifying Him, and forward to all that would thereafter be done in continuation of that act. As Lange remarks, the word of this intercession stretches out two arms; the one to atone for all the sins which had gone before; the other, to atone for all the sins which should follow." This same expositor lays great stress on the words *for they know not what they do*, giving them the force of the conditional *if*, not that their ignorance would *deserve* grace; but the reason is derived from their miserable condition, their ignorance making it yet possible that forgiveness shall be extended to them. In closing these remarks, we would make prominent this great truth, that our Lord's prayer for the forgiveness of his enemies is not unconditional, so as to dispense with repentance and faith in his blood. No one can actually possess the blessing of forgiveness provided and made accessible by our Lord's death and intercession, who does not comply with the requisitions of the gospel, namely, repentance for sin and faith in Jesus Christ. "The Lord is merciful, but He says—acknowledge thine iniquity (Jer. 8: 13). That is a miserable perversion of this sacred word, which regards the petition for forgiveness, obviously presupposing the conditions of that forgiveness, as an *unconditional assurance* and bestowment of it." Stier.

*Forgive them.* There can be hardly a doubt that some of those who were engaged in this awful tragedy, were the objects of God's converting grace on the day of Pentecost, and in the time of the subsequent outpourings of the Spirit. See Acts 2: 22, 23, 36, 37; 6: 7. *They know not, &c.* They have no conception of the fact, that they are crucifying the Son of God, by whose offering of himself to death atonement is made for the sins of men. It was ignorance of this sort which Paul adduced as the reason, why his sin was not beyond the limit of divine forgiveness (1 Tim. 1: 18). *And they parted*

35 And 'the people stood beholding. And the 'rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mock-

*e* Ps. 22: 17; Zec. 12: 10.

*f* Mat. 27: 89; Ma. 15: 29.

*his raiment, &c.* See N. on Matt. 27: 35; John 19: 23, 24.

35. *Stood beholding*, i. e. were standing by as spectators, but not in silence, as we see from the next words *also with them*, by which is noted their joining in with the rulers in deriding Jesus. This shows that the rulers began the mockery. *Derided*. See N. on 16: 14. This verb, which so forcibly represents the act of derision, is found only in Luke. *He saved others, &c.* See N. on Matt. 27: 42. *Let him save himself*, i. e. deliver himself from the cross. In Matthew and Mark, *himself he cannot save*. The permissive form in Luke is put ironically for the denial of his ability to save himself. *Christ, the chosen of God*. A better rendering and more conformable to the Greek, *the Christ of God* (even) *his chosen* (one). The last word was doubtless uttered with a sneering emphasis. In Mark, he is tauntingly referred to as *Christ the King of Israel*. Doubtless both forms of expression were employed in their eagerness to deride Jesus.

36. *The soldiers also mocking him*. They did this rather from the natural inclination of persons of their profession, to join in any popular excitement and clamor, than from deep feelings of hatred, like that which rankled in the bosom of the priests and rulers. Hence, while they united in mocking and jeering at him, they offered him vinegar, which, as Webster and Wilkinson rightly say, was not meant as an insult, but done in kindness. These expositors would construct and translate thus: "The soldiers also, when they came and brought him vinegar, derided him." The general opinion of commentators

ed him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 ' And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew,  
*g* Mat. 27: 87; Ma. 15: 26; John 19: 19.

is that it was done in mockery. Pa. 69: 22.

37. *If thou be the King of the Jews*. This term they had caught from the people. The rulers employed the words *King of Israel*; these Roman soldiers, who knew but little about the appellation *Israel*, change it to *King of the Jews*. This may serve as a clue to the point of the insult contained in the offering him vinegar. They probably approached him in mock humility and offered him this common beverage, as cupbearers with bended knee would present wine to their royal master.

38. See N. on Matt. 27: 37.

39-43. This most remarkable and affecting incident of the conversion of the thief on the cross is peculiar to Luke. It would seem that at first both these malefactors united with the rulers and people in deriding Jesus; either because they were enraged that he did not exert his well-known miraculous power in saving himself and them from the dreadful punishment under which they were suffering; or perhaps to show their triumph over their own sufferings, by manifesting such insensibility to them, that they could unite with the jeering crowd in deriding the central sufferer, upon whom the whole attention of the spectators was concentrated. The natural hatred which such monsters of wickedness entertain towards those in the presence of whose meekness, purity, and piety, they stand self-condemned, may have had not a little influence in prompting them to this mockery of Jesus.

But one of these malefactors, impressed with the meek and godlike bearing of Jesus, of whose public min-

# THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 <sup>a</sup> And one of the malefactors

A Mat. 27 : 44; Ma. 15 : 32.

istry and wonderful works he may have previously heard, and if so, was reminded of this by the prayer which our Lord had just uttered (v. 34), in which he addresses God as his Father, and prays for forgiveness of his enemies, on the ground that they knew not what they were doing; and more than all, touched by the sovereign grace of God, which would give Jesus a trophy of his victory over the powers of darkness even in the very hour of fiercest conflict, begins now to entertain different feelings towards the man whom he had previously united with the multitude in mocking. The insults of the crowd, and especially of his wicked companion, are no longer pleasant to his ear. Forgotten of his own sufferings, or rather impressed with a sense of the justice of his own punishment, and the innocence as well as remarkable character of Jesus, he rebukes his railing associate, and at the same time confesses his sins and avows his belief in the innocence of Jesus.

That he at first united to some extent with the rulers and people in mocking Jesus, is rendered positively certain by the testimony of Matthew and Mark, who expressly state that "the thieves also which were crucified with him cast the same into his teeth" (Matthew) and "reviled him" (Mark). The fact that Luke speaks of one as doing this, is not at all inconsistent with the statement of Matthew and Mark. The same principle of interpretation makes this plain, to which we have adverted in regard to the demoniacs of Gadara (see N. on Matt. 8 : 28). Luke takes up the narrative respecting these thieves at the point where only one continues to revile Jesus, the other, being touched with a sense of his own sin and need of divine help, having ceased from his wicked revilings. See the discussion of this point in N. on Matt. 27 : 44. Had Luke asserted that *only one* of the

tors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering

thieves reviled Jesus from the beginning, as Stier strangely says that he expressly did, it would have been a very different statement, and in direct conflict with that of the other Evangelists, who record the fact that *both* of the thieves united in mocking Jesus. But such is not his record of the fact, and his ignoring of the previous mockery of the penitent thief for reasons which are very obvious—it being his sole and simple purpose to relate his wonderful conversion—furnishes not the least contradiction to the statement of Matthew and Mark, that he as well as his wicked companion had previously united with the crowd in taunting our Lord with opprobrious epithets.

39. *Were hanged.* This form of expression is only used here and Acts 5 : 30; 10 : 39 of crucifixion. "In Gal. 3 : 13, it is applied to our Lord's death in a quotation from Deut. 21 : 23, where its meaning is *hanging* as generally understood." Webster and Wilkinson. The words *save thyself and us*, are irreverently spoken, as some think; but it admits of a question, whether they were not at least first spoken with a hope of prevailing on Jesus to miraculously deliver himself and them from their dreadful sufferings.

40. *Answering* to the words which his hardened companion addressed to Jesus. Our Lord himself made no reply to this man, although ready, as we shall see, to respond to the prayer for acceptance addressed to him by the penitent thief. *Do not thou fear God.* The pronoun is emphatic in the original, and gives this shade of sense, *do not even thou*, i. e. is your situation, as a justly-condemned criminal about to be ushered into God's presence, such that you can afford to unite with this mob, in reviling one whom we both know to be innocent? Have you no fear of divine justice, that at this awful moment you can thus taunt an innocent man? *In*

rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

*the same condemnation*, i. e. condemned alike with him at whom you are railing.

41. *We indeed justly*, i. e. we suffer the punishment due to our offences.

*We receive* in recompense. This word is used in a judicial sense, of that which is the award of justice. *But this man, &c.* The contrast here drawn between the thieves and Jesus, rendered it still more unseemly that the vile and guilty should heap insult upon the innocent. The word rendered *amiss*, literally signifies some *strange* or *out of the way* act of wickedness, and has here peculiar force. It does not mean that the innocence of Jesus had respect only to some crime of great magnitude, leaving it to be implied that he was guilty of small offences. It implies that nothing short of the commission of one of the greatest crimes that the human mind could conceive, would justify such taunts, jeers, and insults, as were heaped upon Jesus by the rabble who had gathered around the cross. There is here a concealed argument *a fortiori*. A great crime would not justify such derision as was heaped upon Jesus; *much more* was such conduct unjustifiable towards an entirely innocent man.

42. The penitent thief now turns his eyes upon Him, whom he had faith to acknowledge as the Messiah, the King of Israel; and in humble supplication prayed that he would graciously remember him, when he entered upon his kingdom. What a prayer, and in what circumstances was it uttered! Here was a hardened criminal brought by the grace of God to such a state of penitence and divine spiritual illumination, that he discerns in the man who is suffering at his side, the Being who has power to save him from his sins, and crown him with peace and blessedness in the

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42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

future state upon which he was about to enter. To him he turns for relief, and turns not in vain. Christ here verifies what he had promised in regard to all who come unto him in faith, love, and repentance (John 6 : 37). What sinner can hesitate to go to his Saviour in prayer and contrition of spirit, with such an example of his willingness and power to save. *Lord, remember me.* The order in the original is, *Remember me, Lord, &c. Comest into thy kingdom.* The preposition in the original is the one translated *in* instead of *into*, which has led Alford and some others to translate, *when thou comest in thy kingdom*, (as the Son of man is said in Matt. 25 : 31, *to come in his glory*,) that is, when thou art endowed with royal authority and established in thy kingdom. But the common translation is the true one, the idea of permanent possession and rest after the entering upon the kingdom being predominant (see N. on Matt. 3 : 6). The sentiment, then, is, *when thou comest to abide in thy kingdom.* That this is the true sense is evident from the reply of our Lord, which was shaped so as to meet the form in which the request was preferred. In the words *thy kingdom*, the penitent thief recognized that great and sublime investiture, with which Jesus was to be constituted *King of Israel*; words which at this very time were uttered in derision by a thousand mocking voices.

43. *Jesus said unto him.* Our Lord had preserved the most profound silence amidst the jeers of the rulers and the multitude; but now how ready is he to reply to the request of this penitent transgressor, who amidst the excruciating bodily pains he is suffering, can yet look in faith and penitence to Him, and



implore in simple and touching language his gracious remembrance when he enters upon the possession of his kingdom. The first words on the cross were a prayer to his Father for the forgiveness of those who were thus putting him to open shame, and for all who through sin have a virtual participation in the deed of the crucifixion. Now he opens his mouth a second time, to pronounce the words of forgiveness and acceptance to the penitent man at his side. He had himself prayed that his enemies might be forgiven, and now he granted free and full forgiveness to him who had implored his pardoning grace. Thus he evinced his love and condescension in the very time of his agony and death, and confirmed his own blessed words, that the object of his mission on earth was to seek and to save those that were lost.

*Verily.* The promise about to be made was one of such marvellous import, that our Lord begins with his usual asseveration to its truth. *To-day.* The thief had placed the time when he implored the remembrance of Jesus, in the indefinite future, *when thou comest into thy kingdom*; but he was promised the realization of his request on that very day. *To-day*; not at some time in the distant future, but this very day, as you are associated with me in the pains and death of the cross, and acknowledge me as your King, even here in the depths of my humiliation, *shalt thou be with me, &c.* The thief had prayed for the simple remembrance of his Lord; but in return he is promised an immediate and ineffably glorious companionship with his Saviour. Thus the promise far exceeds the request, and thus he strengthens the faith of the suppliant, and displays the exuberance of his grace in the richness of the blessing conferred. *With me in Paradise.* This is deemed one of the most difficult passages in the whole of the New Testament. With the questions, *what and where* is this Paradise, into which our Lord entered after his death, are various others conjoined; such as whether he entered immediately into this Paradise after his crucifixion; or whether he

first descended into the prison of the evil dead, and thence entered the Paradise of the blessed, where he remained until the resurrection on the morning of the third day. It need hardly be said to those who are conversant with the Romish views on this subject, that this is a cardinal point of faith with the Papists, that our Lord descended into hell, and delivered those confined at that time in the place of purgatory or the *Limbus patrum*, i. e. the higher part or brim of hell, where the Fathers who died in perfect grace, before Christ's time, were confined, and which was far above the lower hell, the *Infernum inferius*, the place of the damned. See New Testament (published at Rheims, 1582, and re-published at New York, 1834), Note on Luke 16 : 22.

Stier supposes that our Lord first descended in Gehenna, and thence ascended into Paradise. "While indeed an immediate transition into Paradise is promised to the thief, this does not necessarily intimate that Christ went the same way at once. It would then have been—*To-day shalt thou enter Paradise with me.* But Christ, as the vicarious Redeemer, even of the apostles, continued necessarily in His own person the humiliation of death down to the lowest regions of death and judgment, in order to conquer these, and thence to ascend victorious." So Meyer teaches: "In the abode of joy in Hades, whither the soul of Jesus after its descent into the prison ascended and remained till the resurrection." Olshausen interprets 1 Peter 3 : 18, as teaching that the soul of Christ, at his death went into *Hades to the dead*, by which I suppose him to mean the general place of departed spirits, the part assigned to the wicked as well as that assigned to the good." So Alford: "We know (1 Peter 3 : 18, 19 ; 4 : 6), that our Lord went down into the depths of death, announced his triumph to the imprisoned spirits, and in that moment—for change of state to the *disembodied* is all that change of *place* implies, they were in the Paradise of God, in the blessed heavenly place implied by the word in 2 Cor. 12 : 4."

This notion, that Christ descended into the under world, to the prison of the lost spirits, is based on an erroneous interpretation of 1 Pet. 13: 18, 19, as referring to a personal ministry of Jesus to these "spirits in prison;" whereas the analogy of the Scriptures, as well as the scope of the context, manifestly refers this to the anterior provisions of grace through the death of Christ, by which Noah and other preachers of righteousness, in ancient times, were authorized to offer through the forbearance and long-suffering of God, pardon and eternal life to all who would forsake their sins and turn to the worship of Jehovah. Thus Christ, by his ministers of righteousness, preached repentance and forgiveness of sin to those of the antediluvians, who, having rejected the offer of mercy, were, in the time of Peter, *spirits in prison*. That Christ himself did not preach to these spirits, is evident also from the very words of the passage. *By which*, (i. e. by the Spirit, which is the grammatical antecedent of the pronoun), *also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison*. It was by the Spirit that the preaching here referred to was performed; and this Spirit was that which operated in and spoke through the ministrations of Noah, to whom special reference is made in v. 20. Words could not be selected to make this truth plainer than those in which Peter has expressed it.

We have, then, no authority whatever, either in these words to the thief, or in the passage of Peter referred to, to believe that Christ went down "as the vicarious Redeemer, even of the apostates, to the *lowest* regions of death and judgment;" or, as Meyer expresses it, to *Gehenna*, the very abode of the lost spirits. The promise is simply, "to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." The words, *shalt thou be with me*, teach nothing beyond the simple fact, that after his death, on that very day, the thief, instead of being simply remembered by his Saviour, should be with him, and participate in all the blessings of companionship with God's Eternal Son.

We come, then, to the consideration

of the word *Paradise*, upon which the whole difficulty of the passage hinges. The word is a strictly Oriental one, signifying a *park* or *pleasure-ground*. That it was in use among the ancient Persians, is clear from the writings of Xenophon, who calls the parks and hunting-grounds of the Persian monarchs and nobles, *paradises*. The word is used by the LXX. for the garden of Eden. Whether it is of Arabic or Sanscrit origin, is uncertain, and immaterial to the present point. It is sufficient that it was a word in universal use among the Eastern nations to denote beautiful gardens, pleasure-grounds, parks, &c. The word therefore became significant of any place beautiful or pleasant. As the Paradise in Eden, the primeval place of beauty and happiness, had been closed to the human family after the apostasy, our Lord seems to have selected this term as expressive of the fact, that a higher and more blessed Paradise was now to be opened to the race; that the paradise *lost* was now to be *regained*, and rendered accessible to all, who by faith would so unite themselves to the *second* Adam, as to entitle them to be with him in blessedness and glory. The Paradise here is not, then, so much a *place* as a *state* of blessedness. Not that we should reject the idea of some locality, where this blessed union of the thief with his Lord would take place. But this is not the main element in the promise of our Lord to him. It is simply, to-day shalt thou be *with me* (which expression of course implies some place in the world of spirits) *in paradise*, i. e. in a state of ineffable bliss.

How then did the thief understand this gracious declaration of his Lord? We must suppose that the terms of the promise were such that he had no difficulty, even in the agony of his sufferings, in comprehending their full and gracious import. It was plain, (1) that the time of the fulfilment of the promise was to be on that very day; (2) that he was to be *with Christ*, which was all that the dying thief could ask for, the particular place not being designated; (3) that he was to be with Christ *in para-*

44 'And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

4 Mat. 27 : 45; Ma. 15 : 33.

*dis.* This is susceptible of a twofold signification, namely, a *place* or *state* of blessedness. Which of these meanings would the thief most naturally attach to the term? To suppose that he would regard it as some definite locality in Hades, answering to the Jewish idea of Abraham's bosom (see N. on 16 : 22), would be to make him more conversant with such points of Jewish speculation, than we can well suppose him to have been, when we take into consideration the antecedents of his wild and lawless life. But, wherever he had roved, he must have heard the term *paradise* applied to pleasant gardens, parks, and well cultivated grounds. Paradise, therefore, would be to him symbolical of all that is pleasant and lovely. It would suggest to his mind peace, joy, happiness, exemption from all pain and suffering. The being with Christ implied all this; but our Lord was graciously pleased to descend from the highly spiritual, to that which was more palpable to the apprehension of the thief, and calls this state of blissful companionship with him a *paradise* of enjoyment. How readily would the poor sinking soul, in the very agony of the death-pangs of the cross, understand and lay hold of this for comfort. Strange that expositors and theologians should attach to these simple words so recondite a signification, when they were intended to be understood by a poor, unlettered man, in the very midst of the most painful death to which the human body can be exposed.

But then, is there not a place to which departed saints go after the dissolution of soul and body? Most assuredly; but all that we know respecting it is, that it is where Christ is. That will always constitute a heaven to the soul of the true Christian. Paul desired to depart and be with Christ which was far better (Philip. 1 : 23).

45 And the sun was darkened, and 'the vail of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 ¶ And when Jesus had

4 Mat. 27 : 51; Ma. 15 : 33.

This proves abundantly that the soul of the believer, immediately after death, is transported to the place where Christ is; otherwise it would not be far better for the apostle to depart this life; or, in other words, while to live would be Christ, to die would *not* be gain (see Philip. 1 : 21), if the soul was not immediately introduced into the presence of Jesus. As Paul had a strong desire to depart and be with Christ, so is every believer sustained and animated with the same assurance, that after death he shall be transported immediately into the presence of Christ. This constituted one of the great petitions or declarations of our Lord's sovereign pleasure in his prayer at the institution of the Supper? "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." John 17 : 24. It matters little where this place of communion and fellowship with Christ in his glorified body is. In his presence is peace, blessedness, and joy. There will the soul of the believer rest until the morning of the resurrection, when the body shall be raised incorruptible, and be re-united with it to enjoy in full measure the glory and blessedness which eye as yet hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

44, 45. See Ns. on Matt. 27 : 45, 46, 51; Mark 15 : 33, 34, 38. In the Breslau Sermons on the Seven words or discourses of Jesus on the cross, we have this remarkable sentence: "The darkening of the sun, the earthquake, the opening of the graves, the rending of the rocks, were not greater miracles than the strong faith of the malefactor whose repentance has been just described. *The vail of the temple was rent in the midst.* See N. on Matt. 27 : 51. This incident in the other Evangelists

cried with a loud voice, he said, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: "and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

2 Pa. 31 : 5 ; 1 Pe. 2 : 28.  
m Mat. 27 : 50 ; Ma. 15 : 37 ; John 19 : 30.

follows the loud expiring cry of Jesus, and such is no doubt its true chronological sequence ; but Luke, in accordance with his habit of grouping incidents together sometimes to the neglect of their true order, has placed the rending of this great veil or curtain which separated the *holy of holies* from the outer sanctuary, with the preternatural darkness which hung over the land from the sixth to the ninth hour. Luke also passes over the earthquake, the rending of the rocks, opening of the graves, and other convulsions of nature which followed the expiring cry of Jesus. A reason why the rending of the veil of the temple is particularly referred to by Luke, is found in the fact that he wrote his gospel mainly for the Gentiles, to whom this exposure of the most holy place to the public gaze was of special interest, in that it symbolized that the way into the holiest of all through the blood of Jesus was open to all mankind, Gentile as well as Jew. See Heb. 9 : 11, 12 ; 10 : 19, 20.

46. See Ns. on Matt. 27 : 50 ; Mark 15 : 37. *Cried with a loud voice.* This was the expiring cry of nature. But it implies something more than the mere pang of dissolution. When we remember that the agony of the cross exerted from him no cry of pain, but that his only complaint had been his apparent desertion of God, may we not attribute, in part at least, this last cry to his anguish of spirit, which was so great as to hasten his death much beyond what was usual? *Father, into thy hands, &c.* This committing of his soul to God followed the cry of anguish, and the words "it is finished" (John 19 : 30) ; and indicates a restoration of peace and light and comfort to his soul. He now resigns his spirit to his Father, his head sinks upon his shoulder (John), and he expires. This verse, as Alford

47 "Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the people that

m Mat. 27 : 54 ; Ma. 15 : 39.

well remarks, is significant of the fact, that our Lord made the act of death his own ; or in other words, that there was a voluntary, determinate delivering up of his spirit to the Father. See John 18 : 10. *Spirit* is not to be understood here of the mere principle of life residing in the breath, or that which man possesses in common with the brute creation, but of the rational immortal soul, which exists after its departure from the body. Our Lord possessed a true and reasonable soul, united in close and mysterious union with his divine nature, yet each so distinct that acts and emotions could be predicated of the one which belonged not to the other. This soul he committed into the hands of his Father ; and thus he closed his life on earth by a pious act of resignation, showing himself obedient even unto the death of the cross. Philip. 2 : 8.

47-49. See Ns. on Matt 27 : 54-56 ; Mark 15 : 39-41. A slight verbal dissimilarity is all which exists between the Evangelists in this portion. Luke is the most brief of the three. John passes entirely over this attestation of the centurion to the righteous character of Jesus.

47. *When the centurion.* Matthew adds "and they that were with him." *Saw what was done*, i. e. saw the supernatural darkness, the earthquake, and heard his dying words. See Matthew and Mark. *He glorified God.* I am inclined to believe what was hinted at in my Note on Matthew, that the centurion was so affected with what he saw and heard, while Jesus hung upon the cross, that by divine grace and under divine illumination, he uttered these words and the varied expressions as we find them in Matthew and Mark, not as a heathen, but with the same spiritual significancy which we give them. The

came together to that sight, beholding the things which were

words *he glorified God*, is something more than a profane asseveration by Jupiter, or some other of the heathen gods. His heart was drawn out in love and praise to God. His soul was filled with spiritual light, so that he discerned the true God, and Jesus who had just expired on the cross as his Son; and at once, before his soldiers and all who stood by, made open and public confession of his belief, and praised God for his goodness in sending his Son to die. We should not hesitate to admit this great and glorious truth of the centurion's conversion, on the ground that he had received no religious instruction and offered up no prayer for mercy, as did the penitent thief. He had been receiving instruction as to the divine mission and character of Jesus, from the time he heard that wondrous prayer, when the soldiers had driven the great iron spikes through his hands and feet, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." His ear had been open to the infuriated shouts of the mocking multitude, and his eye had seen with what meekness the sufferer had borne these taunts and bitter insults. He had heard his cry, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* and if he did not understand its full purport, he was arrested by the strangeness of the words. The prolonged darkness, the trembling of the earth, the rending of rocks, the breathless haste with which the message had been brought to the rulers and priests, that the great vail of the temple had been rent from the top to the very bottom—all conspired to deepen his conviction that this was no ordinary man that hung upon the cross before him. And now, when in calm composure he commits his soul to the keeping of his Heavenly Father, with the mysterious words *It is finished*, the Roman officer can no longer restrain himself, but breaks out in praises to God, and testifies in the hearing of all, that Jesus was a righteous person, and none other than the Son of God. As to the question

done, smote their breasts and returned.

whether he had implored the pardon of God, his soul may, for aught we know, have been lifted up in prayer and drawn out in love to Him who hung in agony on the cross, long before his death. Of this we are not informed; we only have the result, "he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man." *Righteous man* would have been more correctly translated *just*, i. e. innocent. The centurion argued that if he was an innocent man, he could be no other personage than what he declared himself to be, *the Son of God*. This harmonizes Luke with Matthew and Mark, the varied forms of expression referring to one and the same sentiment that Jesus was the Son of God.

48. This verse is peculiar to Luke, and describes the effect which this awful scene had upon the multitude, most if not all of whom had united in mocking Jesus, as he hung on the cross. *All the people* refers to the throngs who had collected to witness the execution. The friends of Jesus, referred to in Matt. 27 : 55, 56; Mark 15 : 40, 41, are not included, for they had stood by the cross with such sympathizing anguish of spirit and love for the sufferer, in whom all their hopes centred, that they had no occasion to depart from the cross smiting their breasts in a self-accusing spirit. They are referred to in the following verse. *To that sight*, i. e. as spectators of the execution. *The things which were done*, i. e. the supernatural darkness, the earthquake, and the expiring cry of Jesus. *Smote their breasts* in guilty fear and apprehension of divine judgment, for the part they had taken in clamorously demanding the death of Jesus (v. 23), and insulting him as he hung upon the cross. *Returned to the city*. They had no disposition to remain any longer at a place, where they had united in impious railing against one, whose innocence and superior dignity had been so fully attested by the wonderful events which had just taken place. Alford remarks that their smiting the breast was a sign

49 \* And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

50 ¶ And, behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor; *and he was* a good man, and a just:

o Ps. 38 : 11; Mat. 27 : 55; Ma. 15 : 40; see John 19 : 25. p Mat. 27 : 57; Ma. 15 : 42; John 19 : 38.

of self-accusation, at least for the time—which is renewed on the preaching of Peter, Acts 2 : 37.

49. *Acquaintance*, who personally knew him. *And the women, &c.* See N. on Matt. 27 : 55. *Stood afar off.* This is intended as a general remark, for several of the women at least, together with the mother of Jesus, and the disciple whom he loved, stood very near the cross, as we learn from John 19 : 25. *These things*, i. e. the convulsions of nature, and other wonders which attended the crucifixion of Jesus.

50-56. THE BODY OF JESUS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE CROSS. THE BURIAL. Jerusalem. Sixth day of the Week. See Ns. on Matt. 27 : 57-61; Mark 15 : 42-47. This portion follows John 19 : 31-42.

50. *A counsellor*, i. e. a member of the Sanhedrim. *Good* is here used of one who is kind, benevolent, compassionate; *just*, of one who is a strict observer of the law. A better and more compact translation would have been, *a man good and just*. The italicized words in our common version are needless to the sense. So in the next verse, where the main thought is resumed, the omission of the italicized words, *he was*, would have placed the words of *Arimathea*, in grammatical connection with *good and just man*, to which they properly belong.

51. *Had not consented*; more literally, *had not accorded with*. The word is used of casting or giving one's vote with others. Alford thinks that he had absented himself from the meeting, and thus took no part in the trial, which resulted in the condemnation of Jesus. But the very reverse of this seems to

51 The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them: *he was* of Arimathea, a city of the Jews; 'who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

52 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

q Ma. 15 : 43; ch. 2 : 25, 38.

me to be indicated by the words. It would be a very singular form of expression, to say of a man, who was absent from a trial, and took no part whatever in the proceedings, that he did not vote with those who condemned the man tried; which by every fair principle of interpretation would imply that he was present and voted against the measure. Joseph was doubtless present, and raised his voice in strong and decided opposition to the unjust and illegal proceedings. Gamaliel and others may have stood with him, and resisted as far as possible the iniquitous sentence. See N. on Matt. 26 : 66 (end). *Counsel and deed* comprise the whole transaction from its incipient plan and design, to its final execution. *A city of the Jews*. Although Arimathea was a city of Benjamin, yet it was but about six miles N. of Jerusalem. *Waited for the kingdom of God*. See N. on Mark 15 : 43.

52. *This man*. The pronoun is here used alone, but not in the offensive sense in which it is employed in Matt. 26 : 61 (on which see Note). When it has this contemptuous use, the person to whom it refers is supposed to be in sight, and pointed at with the finger. It is here employed in such a way as to emphasize what has been said in praise of this good counsellor. *This man*, so excellent and of such high position in the Jewish council. *Begged*. The very same word is used by Matthew and Mark, and signifies a respectful request preferred with great urgency. The reason for the promptitude and even haste manifested in this act of Joseph, is referred to in my Note on Matt. 27 : 57.

53 'And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

54 And that day was 'the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

55 And the women also, 'which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and 'beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

• Mat. 27: 59; Ma. 15: 46. • Mat. 27: 62; Ch. 8: 2. • Ma. 15: 47.

*Wherein never, &c.* Thus also John (19: 41) speaks of the sepulchre. Matthew calls it *his own new tomb*. The important bearing of this upon the fact of our Lord's resurrection is referred to in N. on Matt. 27: 60.

54. See N. on Matt. 27: 57; Mark 15: 42. *The Sabbath drew on*, i. e. the evening was approaching which commenced the Jewish Sabbath.

55. See Ns. on Matt. 27: 57; Mark 15: 47. *The women*. Their names are given in Matthew and Mark. *How his body was laid*. This refers to his position in the tomb. *Prepared spices and ointments*. As but a short time remained until sunset, they must have hastened with great diligence to the purchase and preparation of those ointments and spices. What they lacked, however, they procured when the Jewish sabbath had ended, which was at sunset preceding the morning of the resurrection. See N. on Mark 16: 1. *Spices and ointments*. The former refers to spices, sweet herbs and the like; the latter, to the ointments and oils with which bodies were anointed. Webster and Wilkinson refer the cause of this extensive and costly preparation (see John 19: 39) to the commendation bestowed by our Lord upon the act of anointing narrated in Mark 14: 3, 8. But this is taking a low view of their pious act. The same love for their departed Lord prompted them to this painstaking and costly service, which actuated Mary of Bethany to anoint him with such precious ointment while he was yet alive.

56 And they returned, and 'prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day 'according to the commandment.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

NOW 'upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, 'bringing the spices

• Ma. 16: 1. • Ex. 20: 10. • Mat. 28: 1; Ma. 16: 1; John 20: 2. • Ch. 28: 54.

*Rested on the Sabbath day*. Hardly can an instance be cited in which such profound respect for holy time is evinced, as is furnished here in the conduct of these women, who, although they were so anxious to pay due rites to the body of their departed Lord, that they rose up the next morning, and proceeded to the sepulchre, while it was yet dark (John 20: 1), yet did not in this whole transaction trespass at all on the sabbath, knowing well, that though they were engaged in so pious a service, yet obedience to God's law was better than sacrifice (1 Sam. 15: 22). *The commandment* to keep the sabbath day holy.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

1-3. VISIT OF THE WOMEN TO THE SEPULCHRE. *Jerusalem*. First day of the Week. The orderly connection of events requires that the reader should turn to Matt. 27: 62-66; Mark 16: 1; Matt. 28: 2-4, where we are informed of the watch placed at the sepulchre, the buying of sweet spices by the women, the rolling away of the stone by the angel, and the effect which the glorious apparition had upon the keepers of the sepulchre. Now the four Evangelists synchronize in the visit of Mary Magdalene and others, early in the morning of the first day of the week. For the general comments therefore on this passage, see Ns. on Matt. 28: 1; Mark 16: 2-4; John 20: 1, 2.

1. *Now upon the first day of the week*. This grammatically answers to

which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them.

2 'And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 'And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

c Mat. 28: 2; Ma. 16: 4. d V. 28; Ma. 16: 5-

the word *sabbath day* in v. 56 of the preceding chapter. The women rested on the sabbath, but now on the morning of the first day, they are astir betimes, and hasten to discharge their pious and grateful service at the tomb of Jesus. *Very early in the morning*; literally, *deep morning* or *twilight*, i. e. while the shades of night hung yet heavily upon the earth. A faint light began to appear in the eastern horizon, when the women started for the sepulchre. For the harmonizing of this with Mark's *rising of the sun*, see N. on Mark 16: 2. The word rendered *morning*, literally signifies *the rising time* of the sun, and of man and beast. It designates the time about *day-break*, *early dawn*, and with the adjective *deep*, here denotes, as has been said, the first break of day. *They*, i. e. the women referred to in 23: 55, 56. Other pious females doubtless joined them in this last sad office to their departed Lord. Luke gives no names until v. 10, where three are particularly mentioned, others being said, however, to be with them. *Spices which they had prepared*. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea had embalmed the body in a preparation of myrrh and aloes (John 19: 39); but this must necessarily have been hastily and imperfectly executed, and now the women with new and more carefully prepared ointment resort to the tomb, to commence the process of embalming, which was sometimes repeated for a number of days. See Gen. 50: 3.

2. *They found the stone*. We are indebted to Matt. 28: 2-4 for the circumstances attending the removal of the stone. The word *stone*, has the article in the original, which as it has not been previously mentioned, indicates that it

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, 'behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why

e John 20: 12; Ac. 1: 10.

was the usual stone placed at the entrance of tombs. *Rolled away*. See N. on Matt. 27: 60. One of the epithets by which a large stone was distinguished, was a *stone of rolling*, i. e. one which could only be removed from one place to another by rolling. See Ezra 5: 8; 6: 4. This flat stone or slab, as Webster and Wilkinson remark, probably fitted well the entrance, and thus could be better sealed than a large rough stone. See N. on Matt. 27: 65.

8. *They entered in*; literally *having entered in*, the principal emphasis being given to the verb *found*.

4. *Were much perplexed*, or quite at a loss. *Thereabout* refers to the removal of the stone, and particularly to the disappearance of the body of Jesus. *Stood by them*. The verb refers to the sudden and supernatural appearance of the angels. See Ns. on 2: 9; 21: 34; Acts 23: 27. Matthew and Mark represent the angel as sitting. The word *stood* in Luke, does not so much refer to posture as to actual presence. Luke speaks of two angels, whereas only one is mentioned in Matthew and Mark. For the reconciliation of these statements, see N. on Matt. 28: 5. *Two men*. They were such in appearance. *Shining garments*, i. e. in garments of dazzling brightness. The same word is used of our Lord's raiment on the Mount of Transfiguration (9: 29), only there it has an intensified form signifying *the flashing forth of dazzling splendor*, like flashes of lightning. Here it signifies bright and dazzling as the lightning, without the emission or flashing forth of such resplendent glory.

5. *As they were afraid*; literally *having become greatly terrified*. The word rendered *afraid*, is much more inten-



seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: 'remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

/ Mat. 16: 21; & 17: 23; Ma. 8: 81; & 9: 81; ch. 9: 22.

sive, having the sense of *filled with fear*. Their terror is still further depicted by the reverential prostration on their faces before these glorious beings, denoted in the words *bowed down their faces to the earth*. This feature is peculiar to Luke. *They said*. One of these was speaker, although the act is very naturally and properly referred to both. *The living*; literally, *him that lives*. There is in the question a slight shade of surprise, that *a living man* should be sought for in the sepulchres of the dead. This gives prominence and emphasis to the idea, that in Jesus was life, and that over him death had no power. He was not one whom the grave could hold, or the bands of death restrain. It was not meet therefore that his friends should seek him in the cold and dreary tomb. *Among the dead*; literally, *among those that are dead*, i. e. in the burial places of the dead. This disclosed to the women the fact that Jesus had risen, and was no longer to be reckoned among the dead. In the next verse the fact of his resurrection is declared in plain terms. It is worthy of remark, that in announcing the resurrection of our Lord, the angel did not allude to it as a joyous event, although manifestly so. But in the announcement of the birth of Jesus to the shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, the blessings to follow it not being thus manifest, as those which should ensue from his resurrection, the event was heralded as one of great joy which should be to all people (2: 10).

6. *He is not here in the sepulchre. But is risen and has come forth from the tomb. Remember how he spake, &c.* Compare 9: 22; 18: 32; Matt. 16: 21; 17: 22, 23. *In Galilee*. These women were from Galilee, and the words are the same as though it had been said,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And 'they remembered his words,

g John 2: 22.

*while he was yet with you*. Alford remarks upon the different connection, in which the word Galilee occurs in Matthew and Mark. But these Evangelists respectively record a different portion of the angelic announcement. It is thus by a comparison of the gospels, that we obtain a full and connected view of these and other events in our Lord's history, which we should fail in a measure to obtain, were we to confine our attention to any one of the gospels apart from the others.

7. *Sinful men*. Our Lord, in announcing his own death, did not employ the epithet *sinful*. Unless reference is here made to the Gentiles (see 18: 32), the angel adds this as his own expression of the character of all who had any agency in the crucifixion of Jesus.

8. This verse is found only in Luke. It is very singular that they should have so completely lost sight of these repeated declarations of our Lord, as not to have had them forced upon their remembrance by the events of his betrayal and death, which so strictly corresponded to the terms of the prediction. But the key to their insensibility is to be found in the entire overthrow of all their hopes, and the prostration of all their mental powers by the dreadful scene which they had witnessed on Calvary. Reluctance to give up their cherished hopes of a temporal Messiah, who was to be victorious over all his enemies at Jerusalem, and reign in oriental splendor over all the earth, had no small influence in blinding their minds to the full purport of those sad predictions which he frequently made of his coming sufferings and death. The resurrection, which he also foretold of himself, and which should have been the event on which their hearts fastened with joyful assurance, following as it did

9 <sup>a</sup> And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and 'Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women* that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

<sup>a</sup> Mat. 28 : 8; Ma. 16 : 10. <sup>c</sup> Ch. 8 : 8.

the dismal scene of his predicted death, was overlooked by them, or regarded as a dark and mysterious thing altogether beyond their comprehension. In this aspect, it is not so strange that the whole prediction was lost sight of, until they were reminded of it in express terms by the angel. Our Lord's words in v. 25, throw much light upon the state of the disciples' mind during these days of darkness and dejection. They were slow of heart to believe what had been told them of a suffering Messiah.

9-11. Luke passes over the appearance of our Lord to the women, as related by Matthew and Mark, and groups together the report made by them to the apostles; whereas we find in John 20 : 2, that Mary Magdalene was the first to return from the sepulchre, and inform Peter and John of the removal of the body of Jesus from the tomb. There is no discrepancy, however, for they all reported what they had seen and heard at the sepulchre, although at different times. Luke, instead of referring to their reports in detail, groups them together for the sake of unity and brevity. For the order and connection of the visits made by the women, and the appearances of our Lord to them, see Na. on Matt. 28 : 5-10. *To all the rest of the disciples who were with the apostles. It was Mary Magdalene, &c.* The extraordinary intelligence demanded that the names of some who reported it should be given. Three are mentioned, a number sufficient to legally establish the truth of the report. See Dent. 19 : 15. *As idle tales.* The news was so incredible and astounding,

11 <sup>a</sup> And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

12 <sup>a</sup> Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

<sup>b</sup> Ma. 16 : 11; v. 25. <sup>c</sup> John 20 : 3, 6.

that it was at first wholly disbelieved by them. Perhaps they thought, that in the excess of their grief, the minds of these women had become unsettled; or that they had been imposed upon by the machinations of their enemies. Or a still more probable conjecture is, that they were in a state of joyful doubt, which is denoted by the common expressions in vogue with us, *it cannot be true; such news is too good to be true.* See v. 41. *And they believed them not.* They yielded no credence to the report. They could not, on the whole, regard such intelligence as true. There must be some mistake, some hallucination of mind, some imposition practised upon these simple, confiding women; at any rate, it would be better to reject the truth of the report, than to suffer their hopes to be prematurely raised, and then dashed to the ground, leaving them in deeper despondency than before. We must attribute their distrust in the report that Jesus had risen, to its incredible nature, and not to any doubt on their part of the veracity of these women.

12. *Then arose Peter, &c.* See John 20 : 3, where it appears that in consequence of the strange tidings of Mary of Magdala, who was the first to bring the report of the absence of the body from the sepulchre (see John 20 : 2), Peter and John, to whom she communicated the intelligence, ran to the place of his burial. The grouping together of the reports of the women, to which reference has been made in Note on v. 10, unless the separate report of Mary Magdalene is borne in mind, would make this visit of Peter and John

13 ¶ And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village Ma. 16: 12.

the result of the intelligence communicated by Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, which was some time after Mary Magdalene had reported the state of things at the sepulchre to Peter and John. Too much pains cannot be taken by the reader to gain a full, connected, and harmonious view of what the Evangelists say, in regard to these visits to the tomb and the order of the appearances of Jesus. As Luke mentioned the name of Mary Magdalene with the other women in v. 10, although her return from the tomb had been some time previous; so here he omits the mention of John, although, as we learn from his own words (John 20: 3), he accompanied Peter to the sepulchre, and even reached it first. These slight variations, so far from impairing the credibility of the Evangelists, confirm the truth of their statements, by showing that there was no collusion among them. *And stooping down so as to look into the sepulchre.* *Departed from the sepulchre.* There was no necessity or inducement for him to remain there, when the body of Jesus was no longer in the sepulchre. It appears from John (20: 10), that he and Peter returned from the sepulchre to their own home or lodging-place. *By themselves*, i. e. apart from the body, or the tomb in which the body had been laid. By a reference to John 20: 6, 7, it may be taken in the sense, *apart from the napkin about his head* (see N. on John 20: 7). *Wondering in himself.* The words in or *within himself*, may be constructed with *departed*, in the sense of *to his own house*. This would suit better the collocation of the words in the original, and answers to the parallel passage in John 20: 10. *Which was come to pass*, i. e. which had taken place at the sepulchre.

13-35. JESUS IS SEEN BY TWO DISCIPLES ON THEIR WAY TO EMMAUS. *Jerusalem. Emmaus.* First day of the Week. For this interesting incident

large called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

we are indebted wholly to Luke. Mark, however, refers to it in 16: 12. The narrative, besides its intrinsic value, is one of great beauty and simplicity.

13. *Two of them.* A reference to v. 9 will show that others of the disciples were with the apostles, when the report was made by the women of the transactions at the sepulchre. The persons here mentioned as leaving the city for Emmaus, doubtless belonged to that number, although there are not wanting some expositors who take them to be two of the apostles. One is mentioned by name, Cleopas (v. 18). The other is thought by some to have been Nathaniel; by others, Bartholomew, or Luke himself. All that pertains to his identification must of course be mere conjecture. As to the time when the walk was taken, it must have been the latter part of the day, which we are told was far spent (v. 29) when they reached Emmaus, a village, as Luke here informs us, sixty stadia, or about seven English miles from Jerusalem. Some have thought that these two persons were residents of this village, to which they were now returning from the feast of the passover. In regard to the locality of Emmaus, it seems quite probable that it was the village referred to by Josephus, who states (Jud. Bell. VII. 6, § 6) that after the destruction of Jerusalem, Titus gave Emmaus, distant from Jerusalem threescore furlongs, to eight hundred of his troops, whom he had dismissed from his army, for their habitation. Dr. Thomson (Land and Book, vol. ii. p. 540) fixes its locality at the present Kuriet el 'Aineb, which being situated "on the road to Jaffa and on the dividing ridge between the plain and the mountains, the Roman emperor might have deemed an advantageous post for a colony made up of his disbanded soldiers, who could keep in check the surrounding country." "It took," says Dr. Thomson, (p. 541), "just three hours' moderate riding from Kuriet el 'Aineb (i. e. Em-

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together

*maus*) to Jerusalem: first, a long descent into Wady Hanina, which passes between it and Soba; then a similar ascent, succeeded by a very steep pass, and a very slippery path down to Kulonia. The path then winds up a valley, and stretches over a dreary waste of bare rocks, until within a mile from the city [i. e. Jerusalem], where the view opens upon its naked ramparts and the mysterious regions toward the Dead Sea." This shows the ruggedness of the country about Jerusalem, and how great must have been the joy of the disciples, which caused them to return over this rough and perilous road as they did by night (v. 33), in order to report to the disciples the appearance and conversation of their risen Lord.

14. *Talked together.* This word is employed of the most free and friendly intercourse, such as passes between persons who live or are associated together. *Those things which had happened.* The great theme of conversation was the death of Jesus, and the circumstances which attended and followed that event.

15. *Communed together* is the same word in the original translated in v. 14, *talked together.* It is an infelicity that a variety of expression should be sought for in the translation, which is not found in the original. *Reasoned; literally, searched or examined together.* This word seems clearly to imply, what is more fully disclosed in v. 21, that they were trying to reconcile the crucifixion and death of Jesus with the Old Testament predictions, that the Messiah was to be a Prince and a Saviour of his people. *Jesus himself; literally, and (i. e. then) Jesus himself,* the words being closely continuative in time and sense. *Drew near.* As he appears to have been going the same way, he must have overtaken them. *Went with them,* i. e. proceeded in company with them.

and reasoned, "Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16 But "their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

~ Mat. 18:20; v. 36. o John 20:14; & 21:4.

16. *Their eyes were holden, &c.* This is given as the reason why they did not recognize him. It was not that he had changed his appearance or form, but because their vision was so supernaturally obstructed, as to prevent their knowing him. The attempts of some modern commentators, who will swallow down the most incredible theories, if thereby they can throw doubt upon any miraculous interposition, to ascribe this holding (i. e. hindering) of their eyes to natural causes, such as inattention through grief to the appearance of the stranger who had joined himself to their company, or his position as they walked in company, so that his face was partially hidden from their view, are by no means satisfactory. There lies on the very face of the passage, evidence of the intention of our Lord to converse with these two disciples, as one who could speak of the Messiah in the third person; and thus convince them of the true spirit and purport of the Messianic prophecies, and their complete and exact fulfilment in himself, before the evidence of his personal presence should be added in confirmation of his true character and mission. So Olshausen: "If Jesus had made himself known to them, before he convinced them by the force of Scriptural proofs, his appearance would have overpowered them so far, that they would have been incapable of calm investigation. For this reason the revelation of his person did not take place till his chief object was effected." Evidence of the supernatural withholding of their vision is furnished from the words *were opened,* in v. 31, which refers to what took place while they were eating, and where they could not but have previously recognized him had they not been supernaturally prevented. I am as reluctant as any one to call in the aid of a miracle to ex-

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose

plain what may be referred to natural causes. But how these men could walk several miles with Jesus, and listen to his words which were of such power as to cause their hearts to burn within them (v. 32), and which must have drawn their gaze at times full upon him; how, when they reached their journey's end, and face to face addressed their urgent request for him to abide for the night with them; and above all how, when they entered the house and conversed until entertainment was provided, and then took their reclining places at the table with him, they should have failed, in all this time, to recognize him, unless his form and appearance had been changed or their vision supernaturally affected, is beyond comprehension; and to attribute it therefore to natural causes, imposes a far greater demand on one's belief than the reference of it to a miraculous agency.

17. It is thought that our Lord walked with them some little space before he made this inquiry. Seeing them engaged in earnest conversation, as he drew near to them, and taking advantage of the pause which ensued after he had joined them, he made the inquiry which is recorded in this verse.

*What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another?* literally, *what words (are) these which you put back and forth to one another.* The question implies earnest discussion, and shows that the reasonings (v. 15) of these disciples had awakened all their mental energies. It was not a dull prosy meditation on the events of the last few days, but a most earnest conversation, which evinced their mutual desire to clear up the obscurities, in which the whole subject of the Lord's Messiahship had become involved by his death. There is

name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

p John 19 : 25.

nothing in the inquiry here made of them which implies censure, at the warmth of their discussion; although, as Alford remarks, the disciples may have taken different views, and in the answer of Cleopas, we may have had that of the one who was most disposed to abandon all hope. *And are sad.* These words are not connected with *as ye walk*, which in the original is a participle, but with *what manner of communication, &c.* It may be regarded, therefore, as a distinct question, *and why are ye sad?* The word *sad* is the same which is employed in Matt. 6 : 16, of the pretended sadness of the hypocritical Pharisees. Here it refers to real sadness, and such as finds its natural expression in the sorrowful countenance.

18. *Cleopas.* This was a different person from the one called Cleophas in John 19 : 25, who was called also Alpheus in Matt. 10 : 3. The one here mentioned as well as his companion, probably belonged to the number of the Seventy. *Art thou, &c.* This has been variously interpreted. Some translate: *art thou the only sojourner in Jerusalem who knowest not these things?* Others render it, *art thou only a stranger* (i. e. though but a stranger, or merely a stranger), *and hast not known, &c.* Alford thinks that they took him for one who had been up to the feast, and that their question was, *dost thou lodge alone at Jerusalem and hast not known, &c., i. e. art thou one who merely lodges at Jerusalem, and hast no permanent residence there, and yet art ignorant of these things?* The sense, evident from the verb, is that a stranger or sojourner who had lodged for a night only in Jerusalem, might be expected to have heard of the wonderful event of Christ's crucifixion. Our common translation expresses the idea with very good accuracy.

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of

q Mat. 21 : 11; ch. 7 : 16; John 8 : 2; & 4 : 19; & 6 : 14; Ac. 2 : 22.

19. *What things?* The question is designed to evoke a more specific statement of the events alluded to. In this question our Lord neither admits that he was a mere stranger at Jerusalem, nor denies his knowledge of the events which had taken place. It is strange that any should attach to this question a pretended ignorance of the transactions referred to. The design was to make the reply to this inquiry the basis of instruction and spiritual illumination, in regard to the difficulties which they felt in reconciling the Messianic predictions with the crucifixion of Jesus, whom they had supposed to be the Christ. *And they said.* The plural is often used when only one acts as speaker. Some, without sufficient reason, have supposed from the different tone of the latter part of this verse, compared with what follows, that both the disciples replied to Jesus, and that here we have the germ of this dispute or discussion, in the hopeful reply of the one (v. 19) and the despondency which marked that of the other (vs. 20, 21). But it is more natural to suppose that only one spoke in reply, to whose statements the other assented. The discussion, we have no reason to think, arose from any essential disagreement of opinion between these two disciples, but from the difficulties which invested the prophecies pertaining to the Messiah, and which were felt alike by both. The answer was very natural. They first refer to Jesus, as a most wonderful personage, whose deeds and doctrines were a matter of public notoriety. But this personage, whom they had hoped would have redeemed Israel from every enemy, had been condemned to death by the Jewish rulers, and crucified. This reply discloses the difficulty which had perplexed them, but it was not one on which they had disagreed and disputed with each other, but which lay in their common misunderstanding of the

Nazareth, 'which was a prophet' mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 'And how the chief priests  
r Ac. 7 : 22. s Ch. 28 : 1; Ac. 13 : 27, 28.

prophecies relating to the Messiah, and the difficulty which they experienced in reconciling those which referred to him as a King and Conqueror, with the predictions of his humiliation, sufferings, and death; which latter prophecies had received a perfect fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth, while the former, which spoke of him as a reigning victorious Messiah, had no apparent fulfilment in the life of Jesus. That their doubts and perplexities were on this point is clear from their own words, and also from v. 26, in which our Lord refers to the necessity of the Messiah's suffering before his enthronement in glory.

*Jesus of Nazareth.* Doddridge paraphrases, *Jesus called the Nazarene.* But the epithet is here simply descriptive and not expressive of contempt. *Was.* There is no necessity from the Greek to translate this with Meyer and some others, *became*, or *was becoming*. "They speak of the whole life of Jesus as a thing past." Alford. *Prophet.* They continue to speak of him as a religious teacher sent of God. His miracles and teachings are too fresh in their recollections, to admit of any doubt as to this point. But his crucifixion staggered their faith in him as the predicted Messiah, who was to reign triumphant over all his enemies. *In word*, i. e. in doctrine and teaching. *In deed* refers to his miraculous powers. He was preëminent for the purity and heavenly nature of his instructions, and his numerous and stupendous miracles. A similar testimony is borne by Stephen of Moses (Acts 17 : 22). *Before God*, i. e. in sight of God; so that God could bear witness of it. *All the people.* His miracles and instructions were all open and public. The people throughout the length and breadth of the land had seen his works and listened to his instructions.

20. The words *and how* connect this sentence grammatically with *hast not*

and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

known in v. 18. *Our* is to be connected in sense with *chief priests* as well as *rulers*. The pronoun shows that these two disciples were Jews, and not Hellenists who had come up to the feast. Alford remarks that they say *our*, not as excluding, but as including the stranger who was walking at their side. *Delivered him to Pilate. To be condemned to death*, i. e. on charge of a capital offence, which if proved would insure his death. Both the design and nature of their accusation is included in the expression. *And have crucified him*. The crime was virtually theirs, although the act was done by Roman soldiers and at the command of Pilate. See Acts 2:25; 4:10; 5:30, where the Jews are charged expressly with the act of crucifying Jesus.

21. *But we trusted; literally, but we were hoping*. Their despondency forbids their use of a stronger term, although the Messiahship of Jesus had been with them a matter of full belief. In the utter prostration of their hopes, they seem almost to have forgotten the high and unshaken confidence which they had in Jesus as the Christ, when they joined in the "Hosannas to the son of David," which were raised by the multitude in the triumphal descent of Mount Olivet. Such is the false coloring which the mind in a state of excitement, from excess of grief or joy, gives to conclusions previously formed. *That it had been he which should have redeemed Israel; literally, it is he that shall redeem, &c.* The present tense is used, because in the original this clause stands as a direct quotation of the words as they first fell from the lips of the disciples; we said in the confidence of our hopes, 'this is he who is about to redeem (i. e. to redeem) Israel.' The words *he that is to redeem Israel*, is a circumlocution for *the Messiah*. The word *redeemed* has not here the high spiritual sense which is now attached to the term. The scales did not entirely fall from the disciples' eyes; in re-

21 But we trusted 'that it had been he which should have re-

† Ch. 1: 68; & 2: 38; Ac. 1: 6

gard to the true office work of the Messiah, and the nature of the deliverance which he was to effect for his people, until the descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. See Acts 1: 6. The verb here rendered *redeemed*, literally signifies *to release by the payment of a ransom*, and hence *to ransom*, *to deliver by ransom*. The only other instances of the employment of this simple and uncompounded verb in the New Testament are Tit. 2: 14; 1 Pet. 1: 18. The noun from which the verb is derived is found in Matt. 20: 28 (on which see Note); Mark 10: 45. Another noun of kindred signification derived from the verb is found in Luke 1: 68; 2: 38. In all these instances of the use of this group of words, the generic idea is *deliverance from evil*; whether spiritual or temporal or an admixture of both, depending upon the spiritual illumination and evangelical views of the speaker or writer. In Matthew and Mark, as above cited, the word *ransom* or *deliverance*, has its higher spiritual signification, being employed by our Lord to denote the object for which he gave his life. Such also is the use of the verb in Tit. 2: 14, and in 1 Pet. 1: 18. But in the present instance, the imperfect views of the disciples in regard to the design of our Lord's mission, compel us to attach to the word the idea also of temporal deliverance from the Roman yoke, although with it redemption from all the moral evils, which mar the happiness of men, and turn away the soul from the true worship of God.

*Besides all this; more literally, with all these things*, i. e. in connection with this destruction of our hopes is another circumstance which tends to increase our despondency, and that is this, *to-day is the third day, &c.* This is not the exact translation of the original, which is *he (i. e. Jesus) is passing this third day; or to-day (it) is now going on the third day*. This latter translation and construction, if we substitute

deemed Israel: and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and \*certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

u Mat. 28: 8; Ma. 16: 10; va. 9, 10; John 20: 18.

now for *to-day*, corresponds exactly with our idiom and form of expression, *it is now going on the third day*. I would prefer this translation, were it not that the speaker seems to allude in unmistakable terms to the promise of Jesus, that he would rise on the third day. This day had now well-nigh passed away, and his promise was yet unfulfilled. *He was passing the third day* since his death, and he had not risen according to his promise. They had nothing left on which they could build their hopes. Their bright and joyous anticipations were all dissipated.

22. *Yea, and certain women*; literally and better, *but moreover certain women*. These particles introduce another strange circumstance, suggested to their recollection, by their allusion to his remaining yet in the tomb, although it was the third day since his death and burial. But they now recur to this report, which had been first brought by the women, and confirmed afterwards by Peter and John. Why was not this one of the first things which they reported to this stranger; or rather why was it not the theme of their conversation as they journeyed to Emmaus? Manifestly because the whole body of the disciples regarded the report of his resurrection, as an idle tale, and utterly unworthy of belief. If their unbelief should appear strange, after the report of the women had been confirmed—in part, at least so far as it pertained to the absence of the body from the tomb—by that of Peter and John, we should remember the circumstances in which they were placed, and the nature of the report itself, which

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And \*certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the

o V. 12.

was so incredible, that Thomas would not believe it, even when attested to by the whole body of the apostles, and would be satisfied with nothing short of the evidence of his own senses. *Made us astonished*; literally, *made us beside ourselves*. See N. on Matt. 12: 23.

23. *When they found not*. The construction is participial, *not having found*. This throws the emphasis on *they came saying that they had also seen, &c.*, where it properly belongs. *A vision of angels*. It will be recollected that this was a minor point in the report of these women. The main item was that they had seen Jesus himself. Compare Matt. 28: 9, 10 with Luke 24: 9–11. How can we account for the particular reference of these two disciples to the *vision of angels*, and their passing by in utter silence the more important item of the report that the women had seen Jesus? We must refer it to the general discredit with which the disciples received the intelligence (see v. 11), or that they regarded this reported appearance of Jesus as an angelic one.

24. *Certain of them which were with us*. As Luke mentions Peter only as having gone to the sepulchre (v. 12), the plural here shows that one or more of the apostles accompanied him, although not mentioned by name. We learn from John (20: 3–10), that it was the disciple whom Jesus loved that repaired to the sepulchre with Peter. This harmonizes the apparent discrepancy between the statement in v. 12 and 24. *Certain of them which were with us*, seems to refer to the apostles; while the words of *our company*, in v. 23, may relate to the disciples. *Even*



women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O

so as the women had said; namely, that the body of Jesus was no longer to be found in the tomb. This does not refer to the report of the women that Jesus had risen. It was after Peter's return from the sepulchre, that our Lord showed himself to him as reported in v. 34 and 1 Cor. 15: 5. Of this appearance of Jesus to Peter, Cleopas and his companion were in ignorance until informed thereof after their return from Emmaus. The corroboration of Peter and John, to which reference is here made, related therefore to that portion of the women's report which pertained to the disappearance of Jesus' body from the tomb. The words *but him they saw not*, contain an allusion undoubtedly to the report of the women that Jesus had appeared to them. The report of Peter and John that they had obtained no sight of him, was deemed of sufficient weight to render nugatory the assertion of the women that they had seen their Lord.

This then was the report which these disciples made to the stranger, of the circumstances connected with the death and burial of Jesus. They express their abiding confidence that Jesus was a prophet, preëminent for his miraculous power, and purity and spirituality of his doctrine. But they frankly avow that their belief in his Messiahship has well-nigh gone. 'We used to say that he was the One who should redeem Israel; but we hardly dare to indulge in that hope any longer. True, he predicted his own death, but with it he always connected his resurrection on the third day. That day is now drawing to a close, and yet he has not made his appearance to his disciples. There is no further ground of hope. But previously to our leaving the city, certain women reported that, having gone early to the sepulchre, they found the stone rolled away and his body missing. They also reported that they had seen a vision of angels, who informed them

fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

that Jesus was alive. This report, so far as the condition of things at the sepulchre was concerned, was confirmed by some of those who were with us, but Jesus they saw not, although the women had gone so far as to affirm that they had seen him. Their report therefore, so far as this latter circumstance was concerned, was looked upon by us all as an idle tale (v. 11). Have we not reason then, with such a prostration of our hopes and expectations in regard to the Messiahship of Jesus, to look sad and to mourn over our afflicted affairs?' Such is the synopsis of the disciples' reply to the question in v. 17. The way is open now for Jesus to unfold the great prophecies relating to himself, and clear the subject of the difficulties which were so perplexing to them, who looked upon the mission of Christ, in whole or in part, as having reference to the deliverance of the nation from political oppression and misrule.

25. *O fools.* This word literally signifies *without understanding, senseless, dull*. It is not the word in the original, the use of which, as a term of reproach, our Lord condemned in his Sermon on the Mount (see N. on Matt. 5: 22). *Slow of heart*, i. e. sluggishly disposed. The limiting term of *heart*, forbids the interpretation *stupid*, which relates rather to sluggishness of intellect than of the disposition. *To believe* denotes that, in reference to which this dulness of understanding and sluggishness of disposition is charged upon the disciples. However quick of discernment they might be in other things, yet in reference to the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, they were exceedingly dull of comprehension. This shows that the prophecies concerning Christ were not obscure or open to those only who were versed in Jewish literature. So full, plain, and explicit were these Messianic predictions, that our Lord charges great obtuseness of

26 'Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 'And beginning at 'Moses and 'all the prophets, he ex-

y V. 46; Ac. 17: 3; 1 Pa. 1: 11. s V. 45.  
 a Ge. 8: 15; & 22: 18; & 26: 4; & 49: 10;  
 Nu. 21: 9; De. 18: 15. b Pa. 18: 9, 10; &  
 22; & 182: 11; Is. 7: 14; & 9: 6; & 40: 10,  
 11; & 50: 6; & 58; Ja. 28: 5; & 88: 14, 15;  
 Ez. 84: 28; & 87: 25; Da. 9: 24; Mt. 7: 20;  
 Mal. 8: 1; & 4: 2; see on John 1: 45.

mind and disposition upon these two disciples, for not understanding and yielding ready assent to all that the prophets had spoken concerning him.

26. *Ought not*, i. e. was it not necessary to the fulfilment of prophecy, and for the salvation of mankind? *To have suffered these things*, as preparatory to the kingdom which was to be his, and which the Jews misinterpreted as earthly and temporal. *These things* refers to the apprehension, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus, which had thrown the disciples into such a state of dejection and doubt. *To enter into his glory* through this portal of suffering and death. *His glory*, i. e. his glorified state as Mediator between God and man.

27. *Beginning at Moses, &c.* He took a comprehensive view of all the Messianic prophecies, from the first of the series of predictions in the writings of Moses down to the prophets, and thence through the whole Scriptures to the time of his appearance. Alford constructs and translates, "he began with Moses first: he began with each as he came to them." The idea seems to be simply that he referred to these divisions in connected order, making the testimony of each portion complete and independent. He first showed how the types, symbols, and sacrificial victims of the Mosaic ritual, the lifting up of the brazen serpent, the passover, the great day of atonement, all referred to the piacular victim which was to be offered up for the sins of men, and found their fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth. He then proceeded to draw direct testimony to the same effect from the prophecies, and thus passed rapidly

pounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and 'he made as though he would have gone further.

29 But 'they constrained him,

c See Ge. 32: 26; & 42: 7; Ma. 6: 48.  
 d Ge. 19: 8; Ac. 16: 15.

through the whole of the Old Testament scriptures, and taught these wondering disciples, whose hearts were now all on fire (see v. 32), the riches of God's grace in providing for men just such a Messiah as Jesus was and claimed to be. Even the historical portions of the Old Testament were made to subserve this great purpose of pointing forward to Christ—the national character of the Hebrews being so peculiar, and their history being a series of manifestations on the part of Jehovah, in the way of mercies, judgments, miraculous deliverances, inspired instructions, threatenings, warnings, in order that in them the knowledge of the true God might be preserved and perpetuated, and from them might in due time be the outgoings of salvation for a lost world. *Himself*. Jesus spoke of himself in the third person, so that this pronoun has here the sense of *him*, referring to Jesus of Nazareth.

28. *He made as though*; literally, *he was making as though*. There was no deception here. He simply passed on as though he was intending to go farther. This he would have done, had they not with friendly importunity pressed him to spend the night with them. Our Lord made as though he would go beyond the village, in order to furnish occasion for this invitation, which was a test of the interest which he had awakened in their bosom by his conversation. This will account for his not yielding to their wishes, until they pressed him with such importunity that it amounted to a sort of friendly violence, indicated here by the verb *constrained*, which literally signifies, *to do*

saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, 'he took

*a thing by force, to use violence; and hence to constrain, compel.* The verb *abide* is here used of a temporary sojourn for the night. *With us* does not necessarily imply that Emmaus was the place of the residence of Cleopas and his companion; but that they had quarters there for the night, which they wished the stranger, who had so won upon them by his profound and heavenly discourse, to share with them. *It is toward evening.* The construction is a frequent one, being equivalent to, *it is drawing on to evening.* *Is far spent;* literally, *has declined*, reference being had to the sun sinking down into the horizon. From this clause, which seems to give definiteness to the preceding one, we should gather that it was a little before sunset when the party reached Emmaus. *He went in to tarry with them.* This is the same as to say that he accepted of their invitation. The definite terms in which it is expressed, serve to give a full and faithful record of the fact, that he actually entered the house at their invitation.

30. *As he sat at meat, &c.* This was an ordinary meal, and not, as some have supposed, a celebration of the Lord's Supper. But our Lord went through all the religious forms, previously to his partaking of the refreshment set before him, which he was wont to observe on similar occasions, while he was yet with his disciples. In this we have an example which we should not fail to imitate both in form and spirit.

31. *Their eyes were opened.* Here we have the counterpart of what is affirmed v. 16. No one can read with unbiased judgment, or apart from pre-conceived notions, these two passages, and not be impressed with the conviction, that there was something supernatural in the obstruction of their vision and its

bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

• Mat. 14: 12.

removal. Thus it doubtless appeared to the disciples, or we may suppose that they would at least have attempted to follow him, when he withdrew from their company. The whole passage shows that no essential change took place in Jesus, but that the failure of these disciples to recognize him resulted from a hindrance of some sort supernaturally produced, in their vision. There can be no valid objection advanced against this view. If it was the pleasure of Jesus to remain a while in the company of these disciples, without being recognized, He who formed the eye could easily have wrought some change in the organ of vision, necessary to such a result. But while this obstruction of their power of vision, so far as was necessary to the recognition of Jesus, is here and in v. 16 clearly taught, we must not overlook what is said in Mark 16: 12 (on which see Note), that he appeared in *another form* unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. That this cannot refer to a mere change of dress, or to the partial concealment of his features, as he walked with the disciples, is very evident; for neither of these devices to prevent recognition would have been successful with persons, as well acquainted with him as were these disciples. That there was a marked change in the visage and general appearance of Jesus after his resurrection, even admitting, as we must, that his body had not yet assumed its glorified state (see N. on v. 29), there can be no question. A cursory glance at such passages as Mark 16: 12; Luke 24: 37; John 21: 4-7, will show that in all his appearances to his disciples, there was something so unusual in his mien, visage, form, that he was not readily recognized by them. This change will be more particularly referred to in the Note on v. 39.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?

*They knew him.* This recognition stands here as the result of the opening of their eyes, although grammatically, the clauses are co-ordinate. *He vanished out of their sight*; literally, *he was no longer seen from them*, where there is in the preposition a pregnant construction, which fully translated would give the sense, *he departed from them so as to be no longer visible to them*. The translation, *he became unseen to them*, is neither faithful to the original, nor suited to the wants of the passage, for it would imply that he was still with them but invisible to their sight. The unmistakable sense of the passage is that there was a real removal of Jesus from the sight and presence of these disciples. A sudden and even abrupt departure is indicated by the language made use of, but no vanishing from sight, as a spirit or spectre might be supposed to do. We may infer that when they recognized him, they were at first motionless and dumb through astonishment; and before their thoughts were collected to do him homage or address him, he had withdrawn himself. In order to express this sudden disappearance, the Evangelist used the form of expression, *he ceased to be seen of them*, leaving out of consideration every thing which pertained to the manner or mode of his withdrawal.

32. *They said one to another.* The words here recorded were uttered by both. *Did not our hearts burn*, i. e. were not our hearts enkindled with a holy flame of love, and our joys and hopes resuscitated by that wondrous and luminous unfolding of the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, which were shown to have had their full and perfect fulfilment in Jesus of Nazareth? There is a slight self-reproach in these words, for their dulness in not recognizing in this stranger, whose knowledge of the Holy Scriptures was so ex-

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

tensive and profound, and whose words had such penetrating and burning energy, their beloved Lord and Master. It was doubtless this conception of the passage which caused the departure from the common Syriac version (which agrees with the Greek) of that old MS. at Oroomiah, which reads, *was heavy or dull*, instead of *was burning*. But self-reproach is swallowed up in joy, that their Lord was alive, and that they had been honored with his presence and teaching. They recall therefore his conversation, as in itself sufficient proof that it was Jesus who had joined himself to their company. *Talked with us*; literally, *to us*, for it does not appear that after our Lord began his discourse, they made any reply or proposed any question, but listened in mute admiration and wrapt attention to his words. *Opened to us the Scriptures*, i. e. explained their profound meaning, and embodiment of the great idea of a coming Messiah. Both here and in John 5:39, as well as in the argument which runs through the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is clearly taught, that the great and prevailing theme of the Old Testament, the grand idea which underlay the whole economy of the old dispensation was the Messiah to come; through whose blood the New Testament was to be ratified, and sealed, and given to the church, as its own peculiar inheritance, a foretaste and pledge of the riches of the inheritance yet to come.

33. *They rose up from their reclining posture at the table.* *The same hour.* They did not linger at Emmaus, while they had such joyful tidings to communicate to the mourning and despondent band of disciples whom they had left at Jerusalem. The darkness of the night, and the dangerous and rugged road to Jerusalem (see N. on v. 13), had no terrors for them. They rise up at once and return with all speed to the

**84** Saying, the Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

ſ 1 Co. 15 : 5.

city. *The cleren.* This is a term of general designation, as only ten were actually present, Thomas being absent. The apostles were probably reassembled in the same place, where they were when Cleopas and his companion left them for Emmaus. Hence they would lose no time in finding the company. *Them that were with them.* See Acts 1 : 14.

**84.** *Saying* to the two disciples who had just returned from Emmaus. This was also the theme of their conversation to one another. *The Lord is risen indeed.* This was not the strong asseveration of all, for we learn from Mark 16 : 13, that the report of Cleopas and his fellow-disciple did not obtain credence with all. There were doubtless different degrees of faith in the declaration of Peter, according to the buoyant temperament, and naturally hopeful turn of the disciples, or the opposite tendency to distrust and despondency. *Indeed,* i. e. in very deed, truly, really. The adverb thus rendered, is derived from the verb, *to be*, and signifies that which *actually is*, as opposed to a phantasm, or spectral appearance, based on nothing real or tangible. Jesus, their Master, the very person who had been crucified and buried, had really and truly risen from the dead, and been seen by Simon.

It has been a matter of inquiry and conjecture, whether our Lord's appearance to Simon was before or after he showed himself to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus. I am inclined to think that it was before that appearance. The very same hour in which Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of the bread, they rose up and returned with haste to Jerusalem. Now, unless we suppose that Jesus conveyed himself with miraculous speed to the city, he could not have reached it much in advance of Cleopas and his companion. But on their arrival, they find the disciples assembled, and talking

**85** And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

over the fact of Christ's resurrection and appearance to Peter. Apart from the time consumed in the interview between our Lord and Peter, of which we have no knowledge, some time must have elapsed before Peter's report could have been circulated about, and drawn the disciples together, to converse and consult in relation thereto. That the disciples had reassembled on this occasion is evident from the words *gathered together*, which would not have been employed, had not the disciples been dispersed previously to their various homes or lodging-places in the city. I take it, therefore, that shortly before Cleopas and the other disciple set out for Emmaus, our Lord showed himself to Peter; and that news thereof having been spread around among the disciples, they came together, and were thus found assembled by the two disciples on their return. This explanation of course supposes that they had left the city before the news had been communicated that Jesus had shown himself to Peter. This view gives an orderly succession to the events of the day; whereas, unless we resort to the idea of a miraculous and instantaneous removal of our Lord from one place to another, which, to say the least, is not very probable, we make the events huddled and confused, by placing Christ's appearance to Peter after his interview with the disciples on their way to Emmaus. There seems also to be found a reason why our Lord should show himself to Peter first among the apostles and disciples, to reassure him of his love and forgiveness. There can be no doubt that the Simon here spoken of was Simon Peter; and that this is the appearance referred to in 1 Cor. 15 : 5.

**85.** *They,* i. e. Cleopas and his companion. *Told what things,* &c. After listening to the report of our Lord's appearance to Simon, they in turn re-

36 'And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst

g Ma. 16: 14; Jo. 20: 19; 1 Co. 15: 5.

count the wonderful incidents which had marked their journey to Emmaus. They doubtless repeated his discourse on the teachings of the Old Testament scriptures, in regard to a suffering and dying, as well as a victorious and reigning Messiah. The word translated *told*, signifies to *narrate at length, to describe fully*, and no doubt refers here to the full and orderly statement, which they made of all which Jesus said and did after he joined himself to their company by the way. *Was known of them, or became known to them. In breaking of bread*, i. e. as they were reclining at supper. This passage is often misquoted by *breaking of bread*, as though that act on the part of Jesus was the means of his being recognized. The idea is simply that he became known to the disciples during their repast, for which the term *breaking of bread* is generally put. This does not preclude the idea, however, that there was something in his manner so devout, solemn, dignified, and commanding, as to arrest their attention; and in reference to which their eyes were supernaturally opened. Temporal adverbial clauses like this, which is equivalent to, *when he was breaking bread*, often denote the occasion or remote cause of that which is asserted in the main proposition.

36. *As they thus spake*; literally, *thus speaking these things*, i. e. while Cleopas and his companion were rehearsing these events. There is no valid objection to referring this to the conversation among the disciples, which ensued upon the report of these two disciples. It appears from Mark 16; 13, 14, that there was yet much doubt and unbelief among the disciples, as to the verity of our Lord's resurrection. Not that the word of Peter, or the women, or those two disciples was doubted. But they attributed the whole affair to some spectral illusion, or to some freak of their minds, worn down, dejected, and disordered by the awful scenes of the last three days. While they were discussing, per-

of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

37 But they were terrified and

haps with considerable warmth, the arguments for and against the reality of his resurrection, and the degree of credit which should be given to these marvellous reports, *Jesus himself stood in the midst of them*. The form of expression here used implies abruptness and suddenness of entrance, but nothing miraculous. His access to the room was probably by the ordinary mode of entrance; the same as was employed by the two disciples from Emmaus, who had entered a short time previous. What John says about the doors being shut for fear of the Jews (John 20: 19), does not imply that they were bolted or barred on the inside. Had the Jews wished to have broken up their assembly or arrested their chief leaders, would a bolted or barred door have opposed any serious hindrance to their entrance? That the doors were shut in order that they might not be exposed to the espionage of their enemies, and information of their assembling together be given to the chief priests, there can be no doubt. But it is very questionable whether any thing further is meant by John, than that they assembled in private with closed doors, in order not to be interrupted in their meeting by their Jewish enemies, whose eye would now be especially upon them, as the followers of Jesus who had just been crucified.

But even if the doors were bolted and barred, is there any thing in the narrative to forbid the idea that he directed the door to be opened for his admission? The simple statement is, that *he stood* (John *came and stood*) *in the midst of them*, which denotes nothing more than that he came suddenly and unexpectedly among them, leaving the mode of his entrance wholly untouched. Besides this, an argument is drawn against his miraculous entrance through a *closed* door, from the very circumstances of the case. They were at this time in a state of doubt and uncertainty as to the reality of his resur-

affrighted, and supposed that they had seen <sup>a</sup> a spirit.

rection. They had no reason to dispute the fact of some spectral illusion having been brought before the mind or eyes of those who reported that they had seen him. But they doubted whether his true, veritable, actual body had been seen by these persons. It was on this point that their minds were laboring. So fully possessed were they with the idea that the body of Jesus was yet in the embrace of death, that on this very occasion they cry out in affright as though he were a spirit, instead of the real appearance of their beloved Lord; and it required repeated assurances on his part, and an appeal to their physical senses, to convince them that he stood before them a real body, having flesh and bones, as when he was formerly with them. Now had he appeared suddenly standing among them, not a door having been opened or indication given that he had entered as one having a real and material body, would they not afterwards have been harassed with doubts, whether after all it was not some strange illusion practised upon the senses, and not the real presence of their Lord? Doddridge sees and feels this necessity of supposing a veritable entrance of Jesus through the door, and therefore supposes a miraculous drawing of the bolts and opening of the door. To this view, if any prefer it, there can be no objection, inasmuch as it introduces Jesus to the company as having entered in the usual way, and not as an immaterial spirit making its sudden appearance without the opening of a door, or any sign of its approach. In regard to our Lord's resurrection body, no interpretation is to be regarded valid, which ignores or contravenes the great fact, that during the forty days in which he was on earth after his resurrection, his body was possessed of all the general properties which belong to the human body. If we give up this great truth, which he himself took such pains to establish, by eating and drinking in the presence of his disciples, bidding them touch him,

38 And he said unto them,

A Ma. 6: 49.

and showing them his hands and feet, we vitiate and even destroy the main proof of his resurrection. *Peace be unto you.* A usual formula of salutation. See John 20:19, 21; Rom. 1:7; 2:10; 1 Cor. 1:3; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2, &c.

37. *They were terrified*; literally, *being terrified or through terror*. This participial clause stands as the reason why they thought they had seen a spirit. They were so frightened, as to be almost beside themselves. The word literally signifies *to be so scared*, as to flutter or tremble like a bird caught in a snare. In order to account for this excessive fear, it must be remembered, that one suddenly stands among them whom they knew to have been crucified, and whose body had been deposited in Joseph's tomb. The mystery which invests the soul after its departure from the body, always renders its reappearance on earth an object of fear. The boldest heart quails before the idea of a spectral appearance or apparition. The extreme terror of Eliphaz, when the spirit, whose form he could not discern, passed before him (Job 4:13-16), is that of every one who is under the impression, false though it may in reality be, that he is visited by some one from the spirit world. We need no other solution for the terror which possessed the disciples, at this sudden and unexpected appearance of their crucified and buried Lord. *They supposed* (in their extreme terror) *that they had seen (or were looking upon) a spirit*. They cannot even now believe that it is their Lord in his veritable body, who stands before them. They shrink back from him, as from one who has come up from the grave, a spectral form whose presence boded some great calamity or divine judgment. The word *spirit* has here the sense of a *ghost* or *spectre*, and not the vision of some heavenly messenger.

38. Our Lord at once kindly reassures them, and invites them in the most familiar terms to take hold of him with their hands, and thus satisfy them-

Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: 'handle

me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

† John 20: 20, 27.

selves of his bodily presence. *Why are ye troubled?* The question itself implies the groundlessness of their alarm and trepidation. *Thoughts*, i. e. questionings and reasonings, as to whether it is I, or some phantasm, some spectral appearance. The expression, *arise in your hearts*, is not a Hebraism. The form of expression is common in all languages, and denotes the germination of ideas and thoughts, which from the analogy of nature, are represented as springing up and having their growth in the heart.

39. *Behold my hands, &c.* It is uncertain whether our Lord refers to his hands and feet, because they bore the marks of the nails, and thus served to identify him beyond a doubt to his incredulous disciples; or because these parts of his body were uncovered, and exposed therefore to a more ready examination. Perhaps both reasons may be assigned to the act. *That it is I myself*, as I was when with you previous to my crucifixion. The pronoun *myself*, is in emphatic opposition to their notion of his being a spectral appearance. It is the very form of expression employed the world over, to denote the personal identity of the one making use of it. It denotes here that our Lord was the very person whom they had formerly known him to be. It denies that he had undergone any change whatever. He stood before them with the very same body, in all its physical properties and parts, hands, feet, eyes, mouth, which he had when he was among them as their friend and teacher. *Handle*. The word literally signifies *to stroke with the hand, to caress*, by laying the hand upon one, and hence *to handle, to feel after with the hand*. The word therefore means more than the mere touch. *And see*, i. e. satisfy yourselves by freely placing your hands on my person, that I am a living, bodily reality, and not a

spirit as you suppose me to be. *For a spirit, &c.* The immateriality of the spirit was a matter of universal belief among the ancients. The Greek and Roman poets abound in references to the incorporeality of those who have departed this life. Compare Hom. *Odys.* 11: 218-221; Virg. *Æn.* 6: 702; Ovid *Met.* 4: 443. Our Lord neither denies nor asserts the truth of this notion, but only refers to it as a thing of general belief, and that according to this view, he was not a mere spirit.

It becomes an interesting and by no means unprofitable question, arising from this and other passages which relate to our Lord's appearance during the forty days which he passed on earth after his resurrection, with what body he came forth from the tomb; whether with the glorified one with which he ascended to heaven, or with the body unchanged from what it was previous to his death, the change to its glorified condition taking place at his ascension from Mount Olivet. On a point where so many great and good men have differed, it becomes one to distrust the wisdom of his conclusions, and to advance them with great modesty. I cannot however but express my decided conviction, that the latter of these suppositions is the true one. If there were no other proof on this point, the passage before us is conclusive. It was necessary to the fulfilment of his own repeated prediction, that his body should be raised from the dead on the third day. Of this great fact his disciples were to be witnesses. They were to have therefore the most indubitable evidence, that of their senses, of the truth of this great fact, which was to lie at the very basis of the Christian religion, as a cardinal point of faith (see 1 Cor. 15: 17). Now, what cognizance by means of their physical senses, such as sight, touch, could they have of glorified bodies? Had any revelation been



made to them as to the nature and properties of these heavenly bodies? Did they know that the glorified bodies of Enoch and Elijah were furnished with the same bones, nerves, muscles, the same power to eat and masticate food, the same vocal organs of speech, that they had on earth? There is a natural body, and there is also a spiritual body. Of the former the disciples had some knowledge; of the latter, none whatever, except the revealed fact that such glorified bodies existed, or were to exist in heaven.

Who can believe then that, when the disciples stretched forth their hands to touch the sacred person of their risen Lord, in confirmation of their faith that he had actually arisen, the thought at that time entered their mind that his body was a glorified one. They know comparatively nothing of such bodies; nor had they received any intimation from their Lord, that he would rise with a body which had undergone so great a change, as in the light of Paul's great resurrection chapter (1 Cor. xv.), we know that the natural body will undergo before it enters the heavenly world. The disciples most unquestionably understood their Master to say, that his body, with its properties and substance unchanged, would be raised on the third day after his death. Such was their obvious understanding of the prediction; such was the verification of this great fact, which our Lord took pains to make on the present occasion.

We cannot question then that it was our Lord's design to give his disciples the highest proof the human mind can demand, the evidence of their senses, that he was a living corporeal being like themselves; that the body which Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus had deposited in the tomb, was truly and really before them. He appeals to the evidence which the sense of touch would afford them, that his body was composed of flesh and bones. This would be to them the highest proof that Jesus possessed a body, having all the corporeal properties which it had before his death. Had the disciples supposed that with all this evidence that our

Lord's person was tangible, having flesh and bones, it was a glorified body, such as is possessed by the heavenly intelligences, would this have removed their fear, or made them competent witnesses of the resurrection of his body from the dead? Surely not. Nor can we adopt this theory, that our Lord's body had been already changed to the glorified state in which it was received up into heaven, and yet was composed of flesh and bones, contrary to what Paul (1 Cor. 15 : 50) says is true of those bodies which inherit incorruption in the kingdom of God.

Alford remarks that nothing is said about blood, in his reference to flesh and bones, showing that the resurrection body of our Lord had not blood, which is the animal life. He refers to John 20 : 27, as proof that Jesus had an open wound in his side large enough for Thomas to thrust his hand into it, and yet it was bloodless. But instead of a gaping wound, may not this have been a scar, which Thomas could readily feel with his hand? The words *thrust in*, might be better rendered, *bear or bring your hand to my side*, as his finger had been previously directed to be placed upon his hands? It is puerile, amidst the wonderful circumstances of our Lord's resurrection, to object that a wound could not have healed up so as to be cicatrized, in so short a time. The resurrection of his body from the embrace of death, would presuppose or rather include as the greater the less, the healing of the wounds made by the nails and the spear.

But while we thus affirm that our Lord's body had not yet been changed to its glorified condition, we will not deny that his general appearance must have been much altered from what it was before his passion. He was no longer the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His work of toil and suffering had ended. His mien was now that of a king and conqueror. There was doubtless in his whole appearance and movements, a calm dignity and majesty, which awed his disciples, repressed undue familiarity, and

checked vain curiosity; while at the same time, his aspect of tenderness and love filled their hearts with peace, joy and praise.

But when did our Lord take his glorified body which he now has in heaven? Doubtless at the time of his ascension from Mount Olivet. His body then became changed, as were the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, at the time of their translation to heaven. But this was not until he had furnished his disciples with the most indubitable evidence, that he had really and truly risen from the dead, and with the same body which had hung on the cross and afterwards deposited in the tomb of Joseph. The resurrection of Jesus was the great fact of Christianity, and constituted the cardinal truth on which was based the church planted by the apostles. They were furnished therefore with evidence to this great truth of the highest kind—the evidence of their senses. But if when pressed by their adversaries, they had been obliged to qualify their statement that our Lord's resurrection-body had no blood, as Alford teaches, or could pass, an impalpable shadowy substance, through closed doors and barred gates; in a word, if they could not have asserted unqualifiedly without any modification, restriction, or reservation, that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead in the very same body with which he had hung on the cross, the great fact of his resurrection, which, authenticated as it was beyond doubt by the testimony of hundreds, who had seen him, made a triumphal pathway for the church in every nation and people, would have been, wherever it was reported, a theme of derision and contempt.

As to what physical laws the resurrection-body, of Jesus was subject, we are wholly ignorant. Nothing in reference thereto has been revealed. All such questions as to whether he stood in need of food, and if so, where he obtained it; whether he required sleep, and if so, where he rested, are of very little comparative importance. There can be hardly a doubt that after

his resurrection, he was wholly exempt from those physical laws, which require for the body food, rest, sleep, and the like. We need not trouble ourselves to reconcile this with the great fact, which is clearly taught, that the veritable body of Jesus rose from the dead, and that it was not an impalpable, shadowy, spectral appearance which showed itself to the disciples at so many different times. His resurrection-body might be one having flesh and bones, hands and feet scarred with the wounds of the cross, a side displaying the wound made by the spear, in a word, complete in all its parts, properties, and powers, and yet stand in no need whatever of food, drink, sleep, and the other physical necessities of our being. Our Lord was not deprived of any of his physical properties, when he walked on the Sea of Galilee. There was only the miraculous suspension of the physical law, by which all bodies of greater specific gravity than water, sink when coming in contact with its surface. Peter had the same physical body as ever when he proceeded on that tempestuous water a few steps, until his faith failed him and he began to sink. An exemption from some of the laws and necessities of our nature, or a suspension of certain functions of the body, does not change its identity or resolve it into an immaterial substance. The physical body of Moses was not changed, when he remained on the mount forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water (Ex. 34: 28). Elijah did not undergo any change of his physical nature, when he went on the strength of a single meal, forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God (1 Kings 19: 8). In like manner it is no argument whatever against the doctrine, that the real body of Jesus rose from the dead, that it was exempted from the necessities of food, sleep, and the other wants of man's physical being. The same argument will suffice also to meet any objections to his possessing a real body, arising from the variety and distances of the places where he made his appearance, which would seem to indicate that he

40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his hands and his feet*.

41 And while they yet believed not <sup>4</sup>for joy, and wonder-

2 Ga. 45 : 28.

had enlarged powers of motion, and the ability to disappear from human vision. The Being who could walk on the sea, feed thousands with a few loaves and fishes, and even raise the dead, could easily make his appearances so as to secure the twofold object of confirming the faith of his disciples by showing himself fully and openly to them, eating and drinking in their presence, and yet of shrouding himself in the mystery of one, who in a certain sense was no longer of this world, having tasted of death, the common and final lot of humanity.

The question is sometimes started why our Lord did not show himself to some of his enemies, as for example the high-priest, or Pilate. A sufficient answer is found to this inquiry, in the object or design of his appearing to his own disciples. It was not to gratify a vain curiosity, nor merely to evince for them his love and friendship, but to proclaim through them to the world that he was an Almighty Saviour, over whom death had no power, and who had ascended into heaven a mighty conqueror, and able to save to the uttermost all who put their trust in him. The high-priest and wicked rulers were not to be his witnesses of this great truth, and he did not vouchsafe to show himself to them. For the same reason he did not make his appearance after his resurrection to the people in general. As the fact of his resurrection was to be a cardinal point of faith in the first promulgation of the gospel, it was to rest on the testimony of a competent number of witnesses, but not on the evidence of sense, as it would have done, had he appeared to the whole people, or to any great numbers of them. He showed himself to those who were to go forth and preach Jesus and the resurrection (Acts 1 : 22; 4 : 33; 17 : 18), and in

ed, he said unto them, 'Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honey-comb.

1 John 21 : 5.

so open and indubitable a way, that they had no greater assurance of his bodily presence with them in the days of his ministry, previous to his crucifixion and burial in the tomb, than they had during the forty days which intervened between his resurrection and ascension to heaven.

40. *He showed them his hands.* It was at this time, doubtless, that they satisfied themselves of his real bodily presence, as referred to in 1 John 1 : 1, and as here denoted by the direction of their Lord. The pronoun *his*, need not to have been italicized by our translators, as it is contained in the article which accompanies the noun in the original.

41. *Believed not for joy.* See N. on v. 11. They were no longer the subjects of a cold, unyielding unbelief, but of one which arose from the excess of joy, which his sudden and unexpected presence had produced. *Wondered.* They were lost in amazement at the stupendous fact of his resurrection from the dead; and this, together with their great joy, retarded for a moment the full reception of the great truth of his actual presence. Their sudden transition from despair to tumultuous joy, and the wondering suspense in which his manifest presence threw them, is highly characteristic of the effect of a sudden communication of good news, throwing the mind for the time being off from its balance, and rendering it unable to reason calmly or act with clearness and force. See Acts 12 : 14.

42, 43. Our Lord, as we have remarked (Note on v. 39), now proceeds to give his disciples one of the very highest proofs of his possession of a real body. The common and popular belief of those times was that spirits do not eat; and hence this evidence, which our Lord furnished by eating in the

43 "And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

44 And he said unto them, "These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be

*m* Ac. 10:41. *n* Mat. 16:21; & 17:22; & 20:18; *Ma* 8:81; *ch*. 9:22; & 18:31; *v*. 6.

presence of his disciples, not only availed to remove all doubts from their mind of his personal identity, but was of use by way of proof against the notions of the Docetæ (see *N*. on John 1:1, 14), and is so employed by John in his first epistle 1:1. He asked for some article of food, *have ye any meat?* When the broiled fish and honeycomb were placed before him, *he took it and did eat before them*. It seems that this removed all doubt from the minds of those who were present, and that henceforth the fact of his resurrection was that in which they as fully believed as in their own existence. The pronoun *it*, supplied in our English version, refers collectively to both the broiled fish and the honeycomb. *Before them*, i. e. in their sight.

44-49. It is thought by many harmonists, that these words were not spoken at the appearance of our Lord here related, but are a sort of summary of what he said during several interviews which he subsequently had with them. Olshausen remarks, that "the Evangelists, on account of the similarity of the truths uttered on these occasions, might easily not only confound the several appearances, but might also with entire appropriateness comprehend under a few leading thoughts the different discourses of the Lord." But may not the charge here recorded by Luke have been given in private to these disciples, and afterward have been repeated in a more general and public manner on a subsequent occasion? I can see no valid objection to such a view, conforming as it does to the emphatic repetition of great truths which characterized our Lord's teachings before his passion. This is better than to seek the removal of difficulties, by

fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then 'opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.

*o* Ac. 16:14.

supposing the Evangelists to confound the appearances of our Lord, so as to attribute to the time of one, words spoken at another. The connective *then*, shows that Luke meant to have his readers understand that these words of our Lord were spoken on that very occasion; and I am slow to admit any explanation, which proceeds on the assumption that he made a mistake, and confounded this with another appearance, on which the directions here recorded were given.

44. *These are the words*, &c. 'Here is the fulfilment of the prophetic declarations made in the Old Testament concerning me, according to my repeated declarations to you while I was with you.' *Which were written in the law of Moses*, &c. The whole of the Old Testament Scriptures is here comprised in *the Pentateuch* or five books of Moses; *the Prophets*, comprising Joshua, Judges, the books of the Kings and Chronicles, and all the Prophets, except Daniel; *the Psalms*, which with Daniel and the rest of the canonical books, were called by the Jews the Hagiographa. *In the law of Moses*. Reference is had not only to the express predictions of the Messiah, but to the whole sacrificial and ritual economy, which in the epistle to the Hebrews is explained as typifying the Sacrifice, which was to be offered in the person of the great High-Priest, Jesus the Son of God.

45. *Then opened he their understanding*. This is to be explained of a direct, divine illumination, by which they obtained a clear insight of the spirituality of the Messianic kingdom as revealed in the Old Testament. *Thus* refers to the death and resurrection of Christ. These great facts took place, just as they had been revealed in

46 And said unto them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day :

47 And that repentance and 'remission of sins should be

p V. 26; Pa. 22; Is. 50: 6; & 53: 2, &c.; Ac. 17: 3. q Da. 9: 24; Ac. 13: 38, 46; 1 Ju. 2: 12.

prophecy; and therefore there was a moral necessity that in conformity with the purpose of God, of which these Messianic predictions were the exponent, Christ should suffer and rise from the dead as it had been predicted of him. The minds of the disciples were now enlightened to see this harmonious agreement between Christ's death and resurrection—events so strange and dark to their comprehension—and the prophecies of the Old Testament respecting him. This divine and spiritual illumination was preparatory and anticipatory of the more copious enlightenment and spiritual anointing, which they received on the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit descended upon them as recorded in Acts 2: 2-4.

47. *And that repentance, &c.* This was also the subject of prophecy and of necessary accomplishment. The tense in the original is the same as that of the preceding verbs, *to rise* and *to suffer*. Although the preaching of repentance and remission of sins had not yet been fully accomplished, like the death and resurrection of Christ, yet it is spoken of as already past, to designate the absolute certainty of its fulfilment. It is also to be noted, that while the preaching of repentance and remission of sins is connected with the passion and resurrection of Jesus, as a part of the predictions in relation thereto, yet these are the results of his suffering and resurrection. The great offering of the Son of God for the sins of men, implied and rendered necessary corresponding efforts to bring men to accept of him as their Redeemer and Saviour. *Remission of sins* is here and elsewhere the consequence of repentance, and not independent and irrespective of it. *In*

preached in his name 'among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And 'ye are witnesses of these things.

49 'And, behold, I send the

r Ga. 12: 3; Pa. 22: 27; Is. 49: 6, 22; Ja. 31: 84; Ho. 2: 23; Mt. 4: 2; Mal. 1: 11. s John 15: 27; Ac. 1: 8, 22; & 2: 32; & 3: 15. t Is. 44: 3; Joel 2: 28; John 14: 16, 26; & 15: 26; & 16: 7; Ac. 1: 4; & 2: 1, &c.

*his name*, i. e. on his authority and by virtue of his command. The preposition in Greek gives the idea of *resting upon* his name and authority, in the execution of the task here assigned them. See Ns. on 9: 49; Acts 4: 12. *Beginning at Jerusalem*. Salvation through the blood of Christ, was first to be offered to the Jews, to whom pertained "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." Rom. 9: 4. But the word *beginning* shows that the proclamation of the gospel was not to be confined within such narrow limits. The disciples were commanded to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16: 15). Had the Jews received and acknowledged Jesus as their Messiah, it would not have prevented the message of salvation from being carried to all nations. The universal proclamation of the gospel did not depend on the contingency, as to how the Jews would receive it. The precept here given had reference to the order of its promulgation. It was first to be preached at Jerusalem to the Jews, and then proclaimed abroad in every nation on the face of the earth, in all its richness, freedom, and blessedness.

48. *And ye are witnesses of these things*, i. e. of Christ's death and resurrection, on which great cardinal truths the gospel rested as a remedial provision for the wants of sinful men. See 1 Cor. 15: 14-17.

49. *The promise of my Father*. This promise refers to the baptism of the Holy Ghost. See Acts 1: 5. Our Lord had promised that the Father would send the Holy Ghost in his name. See

promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

50 ¶ And he led them out \* as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

\* Ac. 1 : 12

John 14 : 16, 26; 15 : 26. In these passages, as well as the one before us, Christ represents himself as acting conjointly with the Father in sending the Spirit. "The procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son is clearly here declared, as well as that from the Father." Alford. *Upon you.* The language implies effusion. See Acts 2 : 17. *Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem.* This command was repeated just before his ascension. Acts 1 : 4. See Ns. on vs. 44-49. *Ye be endued,* i. e. clothed with, arrayed in. The idea is, that the Spirit was to descend and rest upon them, and encircle them, as a garment rests upon and surrounds the body. The words, *power from on high*, refer to the spiritual power and unction communicated by the Spirit, whose descent upon them had just been promised. Stier remarks that this was the true and complete clothing of the nakedness of the Fall. *From on high*; from heaven, the abode of the Father, who had promised through his Son the gift of the Spirit.

50. Between this and the preceding verse are to be placed the subsequent appearance of Jesus to the Eleven, when Thomas was present (John 20 : 24-29); his appearance in Galilee to seven of his disciples (John 21 : 1-24); and again to above five hundred (Matt. 28 : 16-20; 1 Cor. 15 : 6); the appearances to James (1 Cor. 15 : 7), and then to all the apostles (Acts 1 : 3-8). *He led them out* from Jerusalem. He went forth at their head, as leader and chief. Let us not trouble ourselves with vain questions, as to whether he was visible to his apostles as he went before them to the summit of Olivet,

51 \* And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

52 † And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy :

ω 2 Kl. 2 : 11; Ma. 16 : 19; John : 20 17; Ac. 1 : 9; Ep. 4 : 8. γ Mat. 23 : 9, 17.

and invisible to all others; or as to what hour of the day the ascension took place. All these things are left unrevealed to us, and are matters in themselves of comparatively very little consequence. We are justified, however, in inferring from the brief history of his appearances as given in the Evangelists, that he was seen by none of the citizens of Jerusalem, except such as were ranked in the number of his disciples and chosen friends. *As far as to Bethany.* Not to the very village, but as Alford remarks, "over the brow of the Mount of Olives, where it descends to Bethany." A comparison of the words here employed, and in Acts 1 : 12, may throw light on Mark 11 : 11, compared with Luke 21 : 37.

51. *He was parted from them.* While in the act of blessing them, he was separated from the place on which he stood, and in all the majesty of his divine nature, rose before their astonished gaze, until a cloud received him out of their sight. *Carried up into heaven,* where he sits at the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1 : 3; 8 : 1). This shows among other glorious truths, that when Paul desired to depart and be with Christ, that he did not contemplate an intermediate state or condition, but an immediate entrance of his disembodied spirit into heaven, where dwelt his Saviour; and to be with whom he declared to be so much better than to dwell on earth, even though life was rendered blessed by the labors and sufferings he was permitted to undergo in behalf of his name.

52. *Worshipped him.* We cannot doubt that religious worship is here intended. Any other supposition would

53 And were continually 'in

*s. Ac. 2: 46; & 5: 42.*

be absurd. From that time they made their ascended Lord an object of prayer (Acts 1: 24; 7: 59, 60; 9: 10-17). *With great joy.* They now were enlightened as to the true nature of their Master's mission. He had ascended as a King and Conqueror, and although mortal ears like theirs did not hear the heavenly anthem, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in," with which the approach of the rising Conqueror, with captivity led captive at his chariot wheels (Ps. 68: 17, 18), to the habitation of His holiness was heralded; yet with joy more seraphic than had ever before possessed their souls, they returned to Jerusalem, *and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.* These latter words are not to be interpreted as precluding the

the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

idea of their lodging at night in their own houses. They spent doubtless a portion of each day in acts of religious worship in the temple, and thus waited in obedience to their Lord's command, for the promised gift of the Spirit. We learn from Acts 1: 13, that there was an upper room or guest chamber, spacious enough for their accommodation, where they assembled for religious conversation and prayer, and the transaction of such business as might come before them relative to their affairs (see Acts 1: 15-26). From a comparison of these passages, we see that whether in the temple or in this upper room, they were in a state of prayerful and earnest expectation for the promised blessing of the Spirit, which on the day of Pentecost was granted them, in the manner described in Acts 2: 1-13.

THE END.











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